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A

MEMOIR

OF THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

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DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

IN FOUR BOOKS.

BY

CHARLES MAC FARLANE,

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION,"
"OUR INDIAN EMPIRE," ETC.

WITH

A CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

"Virtutis Fortuna Comes."

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TO THE

MARQUIS OF ANGLESEY,

THE

MARQUIS OF LONDONDERRY,

THE

VISCOUNT HARDINGE,

AND THE

OTHER SURVIVORS OF THE BRAVE MEN

WHO FOUGHT UNDER THE DUKE

IN THE PENINSULA OR IN THE NETHERLANDS,

THIS SMALL VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

We cannot afford, now-a-days, to lose great men, for the great men of this age are not yet ripe. And yet the powerful hand of death tears asunder the bands which bind them to us; and though it causes us pain to lose the mighty spirits to which we have been so long accustomed to appeal in doubtful matters, yet there is a beneficent purpose in their removal. The full effects of the strivings of great men can scarcely be appreciated until after their death—the consequences on the outer world are not complete. In the case of the Duke of Wellington, however—whose earthly career has closed within these last twenty-four hours—the rule would almost appear to be diverged from: his greatness seems to have already acted on the world; and so indeed it has.

But the consequences of his decease will place him more fully before the world: a more perfect appreciation will follow the final touch which leaves the picture of his life complete, and the contemplation of that picture will fan the flame of patriotism of many a bosom in all the nations of the

earth; and while his honoured name stands forth the greatest of modern generals, other hearts will be warmed by the glow of his English feeling into greatness. Great men thus make men great. One poet makes more poets; one statesman engenders many statesmen; one general brings forth many generals. Thus, if we have one great man, he is always of use to us; and though his bodily presence is not, we have the consequence of his existence ever at hand.

The Duke of Wellington, then, was not only a benefactor to his country and to Europe in quelling the formidable insurrection raised by the meanest of heroes—Napoleon Bonaparte; but his acts and despatches will remain a memorial for the study of the young soldier for ever; and when the next relapse into barbarism and mythology shall come, the name of Wellington will shine amid the darkness as a far more honourable name than that of Charlemagne, or even of the much-lauded Greeks.

One of the reasons of the great Duke's brilliant success and lasting fame is to be found in the fact of his never falling into the errors of his predecessors, and indeed, "no man ever yet obtained the lasting renown of a consummate general, who committed the same mistakes as had been committed in the same position by those before him, who suffered great reverses by great improvidences, who never rose up again after one discomfiture, or who led forth army upon army fruitlessly." *

So apt and so excellent are the remarks of the *Times* upon this painful event, that I shall submit a portion of them to the reader:—

"If aught can lessen this day the grief of England upon the death of her greatest son, it is the recollection that the life which has just closed leaves no duty incomplete, and no honour unbestowed. The Duke of Wellington had exhausted nature and exhausted glory. His career was one

* Landor, Works, vol. ii. p. 458.

unclouded longest day, filled from dawn to nightfall with renowned actions, animated by unfailing energy in the public service, guided by unswerving principles of conduct and of statesmanship. . . . In him, at least, posterity will trace a character superior to the highest and most abundant gifts of fortune. If the word 'heroism' can be not unfairly applied to him, it is because he remained greater than his own prosperity, and rose above the temptations by which other men of equal genius, but less self-government, have fallen below their destinies. His life has nothing to gain from the language of panegyric, which would compare his military exploits or his civil statesmanship with the prowess of an Alexander or a Cæsar, or with the astonishing career of him who saw his empire overthrown by the British general at Waterloo. They were the offspring of passion and of genius, flung from the volcanic depths of revolutions and of civil war to sweep with meteoric splendour across the earth, and to collapse in darkness before half the work of life was done. Their violence, their ambition, their romantic existence, their reverses, and their crimes, will for ever fascinate the interest of mankind, and constitute the secret of their fame, if not of their greatness. To such attractions the life and character of the Duke of Wellington present no analogy. If he rose to scarce inferior renown, it was by none of the passions or the arts which they indulged or employed. Unvanquished in the field, his sword was never drawn for territorial conquest, but for the independence of Europe and the salvation of his country. Raised by the universal gratitude of Europe and of this nation to the highest point of rank and power which a subject of the British monarchy could attain, he wore those dignities and he used that influence within the strictest limits of a subject's duty. No law was ever twisted to his will; no right was ever sacrificed by one hair's breadth for his aggrandizement. There lived not a man either among his countrymen or his antagonists who could say that this great Duke had

wronged him; for his entire existence was devoted to the cause of legal authority and regulated power. You seek in it in vain for those strokes of audacious enterprise which in other great captains, his rivals in fame, have sometimes won the prize of crowns or turned the fate of nations. But his whole career shines with the steady light of day. It has nothing to conceal, it has nothing to interpret by the flexible organs of history. Everything in it is manly, compact, and clear; shaped to one rule of public duty, animated by one passion—the love of England, and the service of the Crown."

In the above remarks the illustrious subject of the following memoir is somewhat tritely contrasted to Alexander and Cæsar, and it seems to me somewhat inappropriately; yet nothing more terse or more expressive can be imagined than the forcible observations on the great Duke's character:—"Other commanders," says the same writer in another portion of his remarks, "have attained the highest pitch of glory when they disposed of the colossal resources of empires, and headed armies already flushed with the conquest of the world. The Duke of Wellington found no such encouragement in any part of his career. At no time were the means at his disposal adequate to the ready and certain execution of his designs. His steady progress in the Peninsular campaigns went on against the current of fortune, till that current was itself turned by perseverance and resolution. He had a clear and complete perception of the dangers he encountered, but he saw and grasped the latent power which baffled those dangers, and surmounted resistances apparently invincible. That is precisely the highest degree of courage, for it is courage conscious, enlightened, and determined.

"Clearness of discernment, correctness of judgment, and rectitude in action were, without doubt, the principal elements of the Duke's brilliant achievements in war, and of his vast authority in the councils of his country, as well as

in the conferences of Europe. They gave to his determinations an originality and vigour akin to that of genius, and sometimes imparted to his language in debate a pith and significance at which more brilliant orators failed to arrive. His mind, equally careless of obstacles and of effect, travelled by the shortest road to its end; and he retained, even in his latest years, all the precision with which he was wont to handle the subjects which came before him, or had at any time engrossed his attention. This was the secret of that untaught manliness and simplicity of style that pervades the vast collection of his despatches, written as they were amidst the varied cares and emotions of war; and of that lucid and appropriate mode of exposition which never failed to leave a clear impression on the minds of those whom he addressed. Other men have enjoyed, even in this age, more vivid faculties of invention and contrivance, a more extended range of foresight, a more subtle comprehension of the changing laws of society and the world. But the value of these finer perceptions, and of the policy founded upon them, has never been more assured than when it was tried and admitted by the wisdom and patriotism of that venerable mind. His superiority over other men consisted rather in the perfection of those qualities which he pre-eminently possessed than in the variety or extent of his other faculties."

Decidedly his greatest peculiarity was a disdain, nay, almost contempt, for the poetry of life. He seems to have considered that he had a task to perform, and without thinking more about it, he completed it in an efficient and satisfactory manner. Yet there was no want of urbanity in his disposition; his manner was kind and cordial towards everyone, and he never failed to interest himself in behalf of any social movement. "Every social duty, every solemnity, every ceremony, every merry-making, found him ready to take his part in it. He had a smile for the youngest child, a compliment for the prettiest face, an answer to the readiest

tongue, and a lively interest in every incident of life, which it seemed beyond the power of age to chill. When time had somewhat relaxed the sterner mould of his manhood, its effects were chiefly indicated by an unabated taste for the amusements of fashionable society, incongruous at times with the dignity of extreme old age, and the recollections of so virile a career. But it seemed a part of the Duke's character, that everything that presented itself was equally welcome, for he had become a part of everything, and it was foreign to his nature to stand aloof from any occurrence to which his presence could contribute. He seems never to have felt the flagging spirit or the reluctant step of indolence or *ennui*, or to have recoiled from anything that remained to be done; and this complete performance of every duty, however small, as long as life remained, was the same quality which had carried him in triumph through his campaigns, and raised him to be one of the chief Ministers of England and an arbiter of the fate of Europe."*

While his opponent Napoleon was raised by chance to the high position he occupied in Europe, it is strikingly apparent that the contrary was the case in our great English soldier. No step was taken, no post obtained, without the most intense application; and thus *he* never fell, while the other lived to see himself forgotten.

"In the whole of Europe there was one single great man opposed to him, wanting all the means of subsistence for an army, and thwarted in all his endeavours by those for whose liberation he fought. His bugles on the Pyrenees dissolved the trance of Europe. He showed the world that military glory may be intensely bright without the assumption of sovranty, and that history is best occupied with it when she merely transcribes his orders and despatches. Englishmen will always prefer the true and modest to the false and meretricious, and every experienced eye will estimate a Vatican fresco more highly than a staircase transparency.

* *Times*, September 15, 1852.

Rudeness, falsehood, malignity, and revenge, have belonged in common to many great conquerors, but never to one great man." * Yet these were inherent in Napoleon, though they were far from the glorious liberator of Europe, who has quitted this earthly scene for ever. But, indeed,

> "Death has no conquest o'er this conqueror,
> For now he lives in fame, thought not in life." †

The author of this volume had thought fit to conclude the memoir with the final military event of his career—the Battle of Waterloo; and, indeed, since that time little of consequence has occurred which yet comes within the province of the historian. But now, when everything relating to the great Duke is of interest, it has been considered interesting to add a final chapter containing the events from 1815 to the present time.

He died, as he lived, an active man; and, as the *Times* writer well concludes,—"He never rested on his former achievements or his length of days, but marched onwards to the end, still heading the youthful generations which had sprung into life around him, and scarcely less intent on their pursuits than they are themselves. It was a finely balanced mind to have worn so bravely and so well. When men in after times shall look back to the annals of England for examples of energy and public virtue among those who have raised this country to her station on the earth, no name will remain more conspicuous or more unsullied than that of Arthur Wellesley, the great Duke of Wellington. The actions of his life were extraordinary, but his character was equal to his actions. He was the very type and model of an Englishman; and, though men are prone to invest the worthies of former ages with a dignity and merit they commonly withhold from their contemporaries, we can select none from the long array of our captains and our nobles who, taken for all in all, can claim a rivalry with

* Landor, Works, vol. ii. p. 459.
† Shakspeare, King Richard III., Act iii. Scene 1.

him who is gone from amongst us, an inheritor of imperishable fame." Well we may believe that the life of the Duke of Wellington stands alone in history!

> "Oh! let gratitude rise from the humblest of those
> Who have known and respected what still is so dear;
> And the spirit that now has arrived at its close,
> With regard be remember'd—and named with a tear." *

September 15, 1852.

* From an unpublished poem by Charles Phillips, in the writer's possession.

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MEMOIR

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BOOK I.

Our Great Captain was born on the 1st of May 1769, a year remarkable for the births of extraordinary men, as, besides Wellington, Napoleon Buonaparte, Marshal Soult, and Mehemet Ali (the late Pasha of Egypt), were born in 1769.

Arthur Wellesley was the third surviving son of Garret, second Lord Mornington (who was created, in 1760, Viscount Wellesley and Earl of Mornington), by Anne, eldest daughter of Arthur Hill-Trevor, Viscount Dungannon. It is curious that any doubts or mistakes should have arisen about the actual birthplace of our hero; but I have seen it variously stated,—that he was born in Dungan Castle, in the county of Meath;—that he was born at his father's residence, near Mornington;—that he was born in the city of Dublin. It is, however, easier to settle the locality, than to decide upon the birthplace of Homer. He was certainly born either at Dungan or in the Irish capital. The family derived their origin from the Cowleys, or Collies, in Rutlandshire, of whom two brothers settled in Ireland during the reign of Henry VIII. Sir Henry Collie, a son of one of these brothers, was noted in the time of Queen Elizabeth as a "sound and fast friend," "valiant, fortunate, and a good servant," and for the good order in which he kept his county. It is evident he must have been a good man of business.

The Earl of Mornington, our hero's father, was a man of most polished manners, and of an amiable and hospitable disposition. He showed no fondness for the military pro-

fession, took little part in the politics of his times, and devoted himself to the study and practice of music, in which his taste is said to have been exquisite. I remember hearing, in my boyhood, an old Scotch lady speak quite rapturously of the Earl's performance. His taste for music, with the elegance of his manners, and gentleness of his disposition, gained him the affection of his young sovereign, George III., who loved music always, and almost passionately. It does not appear, however, that the fortune of the Earl benefited by royal favour. It is always difficult for a court or government to do much for a man who shuns the warlike professions, and keeps aloof from the turmoils of politics. His lordship composed a good many glees, songs, and ballads, most of which were exceedingly popular in their day. Some of his church music was also admired, and obtained for him, from the Irish University, a doctor's degree. One of his Chants is still echoed in our venerable cathedrals, and is admired by all lovers of sacred music. Five of his glees have retained their great popularity:—1. "Hail, hallowed Fane"; 2. "Come, fairest Nymph"; 3. "Here in cool Grot"; 4. "When for this World's repose"; 5. "Go, happy Shade." The second of these has a fugue of surpassing grace and beauty. The third is still included in every collection of glees. A much respected friend, well acquainted with this class of music, assures me that, on the whole, he prefers Lord Mornington's compositions to those of Sir Henry Bishop; and that his lordship's knowledge of counter-point, and of music as a science, was as profound as his taste was pure. He had begun the study of music as a child, his father having been a musician before him.* His lordship died, in the prime of life, at his house in Kensington, on the 22nd of May 1781, leaving behind him an encumbered property, and a large and young family. For his rank and station in life, Arthur Wellesley must have had some early experience of the *res angusta domi*,—an experience very likely to prove beneficial to a clear head and decided heart like his. The Wellington correspondence contains several striking letters addressed to thoughtless, extravagant officers, and inculcating lessons of economy and good order in accounts.

The illustrious warrior and statesman is no exception to the general rule,—that clever and remarkable men have always had clever mothers. The widowed Lady Mornington is

* See Daines Barrington, 'Miscellanies,' p. 317, and G. Hogarth, 'Musical History.'

always mentioned not only as a most excellent mother, but as a lady of great intellect and acuteness, and of a decision of character rarely to be looked for in her sex. No doubt, the easy disposition of her husband, and the difficulties in which she found herself involved, gave exercise and strength to these qualities. The entire management of the family property was left to her care, and upon her exertions, prudence, and economy, mainly depended the welfare of five sons and three daughters. The munificent and magnificent Richard Wellesley, her eldest son, who succeeded to the title of Earl of Mornington, and who was afterwards Marquess of Wellesley, did not distinguish himself, by order in accounts, or by the strictest practice of prudential virtue; but it is ever to be recorded to his honour, that (in most cases without any legal necessity) he took upon himself the payment of his father's debts, and discharged them all.

Arthur was sent, like his eldest brother, Richard, to Eton. The traditions of him in the school are, that he was a spirited, active boy, yet rather shy and meditative. The late facetious Bobus Smith, when Arthur had conquered wherever he had fought, used to say, "I was the Duke of Wellington's first victory." "How?" "Why, one day at Eton, Arthur Wellesley and I had a fight, and he beat me soundly." Lord Mornington, who had always a strong literary turn, and who distinguished himself in early youth by his classical acquirements, was removed from Eton to Oxford. Arthur's tastes were different, and, as he intended to be a soldier, he was sent from Eton to the Military Academy of Angers, in France. England did not possess, at that time, any military school whatever. Marlow College, which preceded the present school at Sandhurst, was not formed until after the breaking out of the war with France in 1792. In Arthur Wellesley's time, the Academy of Angers, in which many eminent French officers had been trained, was under the direction of the celebrated engineer, Pignerol, who has left his name to one of the most remarkable of the fortresses in the Alps. At this period, Napoleon Buonaparte was a student in the Military College of Brienne.

On the 7th of March 1787, a short time before attaining his eighteenth year, Arthur Wellesley was gazetted to an ensigncy in the 73rd regiment, and on the 25th of the month of December, in the same year, he was promoted to a lieutenancy in the 76th. In order to obtain a perfect knowledge of both those arms, he now left the infantry, and

served for some time in the cavalry, with the 12th and 18th Light Dragoons. His rise in the service was of course rapid. By April 1793 he had obtained a majority in the 33rd regiment, and in September of the same year, he was advanced, by purchase, to the lieutenant-colonelcy of that corps, long his favourite regiment.

Prior to this elevation in the army, he had entered the Irish parliament, as member for Trim. According to Sir Jonas Barrington, a lively writer, but no very reliable authority for facts, he was at this time ruddy faced, and juvenile in appearance, popular among the young men of his age and station, but unpolished in his address, and evincing no promise of the celebrity that he afterwards reached.

Another writer of early recollections of the Duke, gives a somewhat different account. This gentleman first visited the gallery of the Irish House of Commons in 1793, being accompanied by a friend who knew the persons of all the members. He says,—"A young man, dressed in a scarlet uniform, with very large epaulettes, caught my eye, and I inquired who he was. 'That,' replied my friend, 'is Captain Wellesley, a brother of Lord Mornington's, and one of the aides-de-camp of the Lord-Lieutenant.' 'I suppose he never speaks,' I added. 'You are wrong; he does speak sometimes, and when he does, believe me, it is always to the purpose?'" The subject which occupied the attention of the house that night was one of deep importance in politics. A farther concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics had been recommended in a speech from the throne, and an animated debate resulted. Captain Wellesley spoke on the occasion, and his remarks were terse and pertinent, his delivery fluent, and his manner unembarrassed."*

Our great soldier's first active service commenced in May 1794, when he sailed for Flanders with the 33rd, and landed at Ostend to join the British army, under the Duke of York, then contending with the French republican armies in the Netherlands, with great bravery, but small military skill or science. The revolutionary party in the country declared everywhere for the French, our Austrian allies were slow and unfortunate, the Dutch troops, also infected by sans-cullottism, showed neither patriotism nor

* See W. H. Maxwell, 'Life of the Duke of Wellington,' vol. i. p. 10. Mr. Maxwell says, he was indebted for this information to a gentleman who afterwards held a high official situation in Ireland.

valour, and a rapid advance of the French, in great force under General Pichegru, obliged the British, after several obstinate engagements, to retire into Holland, and take up a position on the right bank of the Waal. In January 1795, the retreat was continued, through Guelderland and Overyssel, to the river Ems, and hence to Bremen, where our army was re-embarked for England in the spring. During this retreat, through a frozen and cheerless country, in the heart of a winter of extraordinary severity, Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley commanded a brigade in the rear-guard,—the post of danger,—and his zeal, intelligence, and intrepidity, attracted the notice of General Sir James Craig, and other officers in high rank. The sufferings of our troops, particularly among the many sick and wounded, were as cruel as any that ever fell to the lot of a retreating, ill-provided army. Many were frozen to death, many dropped and perished through want of food, especially during the day and night marches of the 16th and 17th of January, when they had to cross the bleak, sandy, treeless, houseless districts that intervened between Utrecht and the towns of Deventer and Zutphen, in the midst of an incessant hurricane of wind, snow, and sleet.

The whole campaign was rich in that sort of instruction which an observing man can always derive from witnessing mistakes and blunders. The Duke of York's army took the field like geese on a common; they had no ideas of castrametation, and very erroneous ones about the taking-up of positions, stationing posts and outposts, and conducting marches. They were also slow in their formations; once formed they stood like rocks, or, if ordered to the attack, they went to it like bull-dogs; but if they were once broken or disordered, it was no easy matter to form them again. They were overloaded with head-gear and heavy accoutrements, and their uniforms were made so tight and stiff, that one might have fancied that they had been devised on purpose to check all quick motion, and to injure health, if not to give the men attacks of apoplexy. Our army had then no efficient staff of scientific or properly educated officers. Nearly everywhere there was a want of knowledge and method as to the means of carrying out orders. The medical staff was in a deplorable state, and the commissariat department was still worse. From the time of the Duke of Marlborough, we had never had a good commissariat, and half of our military failures, and a very large portion of the excess in expense of all our

expeditions down to 1809, were attributable to this one great want.

Our hero had at this time little rest; he returned to England in the spring (1795), was busily engaged all the summer in getting his much-reduced regiment into an effective state, and in the autumn he embarked with the 33rd for the West Indies. But, after being tossed at sea for more than five weeks, and sustaining serious damages, the fleet—commanded by Admiral Christian—was obliged to return to England. The 33rd regiment was landed and sent to Poole, where, in April 1796, it was embarked, not for the West, but for the East Indies. Colonel Wellesley (he was promoted to the rank of full colonel in the month of May of this year) was detained at home by a serious illness, but he joined his regiment at the Cape of Good Hope, and proceeded with it to Calcutta. He arrived at our Indian capital early in February 1797, and was placed with the 33rd on the Bengal establishment.

A venerable and a much-revered friend, who was in Calcutta at this time, and who afterwards filled a high post in the civil service, tells me that his recollections of Colonel Wellesley are these:—that he was a handsome and most soldierlike man, with an eye that looked you through and through; that he was cheerful, free of speech, and expansive among his particular friends, but rather reserved in general society; that he would often sit in a corner of the splendid saloon in the government-house, silent and abstracted for an hour at a time, and then pace up and down the room with quick impatient steps. "It was quite evident," says my old friend, "that he was impatient of monotony and inactivity, and was longing for something to do."

This inactivity did not last long. On the 17th of May 1798, his elder brother, the Earl of Mornington, arrived at Calcutta, as Governor-General of India. His lordship's predecessor, Sir John Shore, a timid pacific governor-general, had allowed our enemies in the East to raise their heads, and to assume an attitude of insolency and menace. If this timid line of policy had been pursued much longer, our dominion in India would have been in jeopardy.

One of the first objects that required Lord Mornington's attention, was the equivocal attitude of Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore, who had repeatedly infringed his treaties with the English, and was now intriguing with General Buonaparte

and the French, with the hope and expectation of bringing a French army to assist him in conquering the whole of the south of India.

"In the month of June a proclamation of the French governor of the Isle of France announced the arrival of two ambassadors from Tippoo, to propose an alliance, offensive and defensive, for the purpose of expelling the English from India, in consequence of which a number of Frenchmen volunteered to join the Sultan, and were taken to Mangalore in a French ship of war. These movements of Tippoo were connected with the French expedition to Egypt. The Earl of Mornington wrote several conciliatory letters to Tippoo, to induce him to settle any pending controversy between him and the East India Company by means of negotiation, but at the same time he did not neglect to prepare for offensive operations, and in November an army was assembled at Vellore, under the command of General Harris, ready to enter the Mysore territory at the first notice. Colonel Wellesley, with his regiment, formed part of this force. The army was joined by a large contingent from the Nizam of the Deccan, an ally of the English; and as the court of Hyderabad expressed a wish that the brother of the Governor-General should be appointed to the command of the contingent, General Harris ordered the 33rd regiment to be attached to the Nizam's force, the general command of which was given to Colonel Wellesley. As Tippoo declined to enter into negotiations, and was evidently trying to gain time, the allied British and native army was ordered to advance into Mysore, which they entered early in March 1799. On the 27th an engagement took place, in which the left wing of the allies, under Colonel Wellesley, routed a body of Tippoo's choice infantry."*

This affair was very hot while it lasted: at one time many of the enemy's light cavalry penetrated the intervals in the English line; but the affair was finished by a bayonet charge of the 33rd, led on by their colonel. This is called the battle of Mallavelly. After it our army advanced to Seringapatam, the capital of Tippoo, who was covering it with 50,000 men, while nearly 20,000 more were collected within the fortifications. General Harris's force, counting Europeans, sepoys, and all arms, did not much exceed 20,000 men.

* The Military Life of the Duke of Wellington, by André Vieusseux, Esq.—A very short but admirable epitome, by a gentleman who saw some good service under the Duke, in Portugal. It was published, in 1841, in Mr. Charles Knight's 'Store of Knowledge.'

Colonel Wellesley was now employed to dislodge the enemy from some very strong posts and outworks in front of the town. There was a tope or mound (called the Sultaun-Pettah Tope) which was intended by Tippoo for rocketing, and which was well situated for doing mischief, but between the tope and our camp there was a greater elevation—the bank of a nullah or water-course—which commanded the tope. General Harris ordered that both the tope and nullah should be attacked, and appointed Colonel Wellesley to storm the tope, and Colonel Shaw to attack the nullah. Both attacks were to be made at the same time under cover of night. On receiving his order, Wellesley wrote the following letter—the first of the many hundreds of his letters which are now published, and which were written with haste in moments of danger and crisis. It is eminently characteristic, showing his perspicacity, energy, and love of brevity.

To Lieut.-General Harris, Commander-in Chief.

"Camp, April 5, 1799.

"My dear Sir,

"I do not know where you mean the post to be established, and I shall therefore be obliged to you if you will do me the favour to meet me this afternoon in front of the lines, and show it to me. In the mean time, I will order my battalions to be in readiness.

"Upon looking at the tope, as I came in just now, it appeared to me, that when you get possession of the bank of the nullah, you have the tope, as a matter of course, as the latter is in the rear of the former. However, you are the best judge; and I shall be ready.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your most faithful servant,

"Arthur Wellesley.

Lieut.-General Harris."

As General Harris did not see fit to alter the plan he had formed, both attacks were made in darkness—and both failed. Colonel Wellesley, with only one company of his regiment, got separated from the rest; isolated, assailed in the tope by rockets and by musketry, and the groping about in the dark without a knowledge of the ground, and without a guide, the career of our great Captain was near being closed most prematurely. It may be doubted whether,

in all his campaigns, he was ever exposed to more danger than during this unlucky night of the 5th of April 1799. On the 6th, the assaults were renewed by broad daylight, and were then attended with entire success. Lieutenant-colonel Barry Close, who had accompanied Colonel Wellesley on this service, soon returned to General Harris's tent, saying joyfully, "It has been done in high style, and without loss."*

All the outworks being carried, approaches were made, and heavy batteries raised against the fortress, Colonel Wellesley commanding in the trenches, and performing other arduous duties. On the 3rd of May, when the breach was practicable, the place was stormed by Major-General Baird, with a party consisting of 2,500 Europeans, and 1,800 natives. There was desperate fighting in the breach and upon the ramparts, and even in the interior of the town; but the English flag was soon hoisted over all. It was a long time, however, before General Baird could ascertain what had become of Tippoo. At last, one of the Sultan's officers assured Major Allan that he had been wounded during the storm, and was lying in a gateway on the north face of the fort. Conducted by this officer, Colonel Wellesley (who had come up from the trenches some time before), Major-General Baird, Major Allan, and others, proceeded to the gate. The gateway, arched overhead, was long and dark, and choked up with dead bodies.

"The number of the dead, and the darkness of the place," says Major Allan, "made it difficult to distinguish one person from another; and the scene was altogether shocking. But, aware of the great political importance of ascertaining, beyond the possibility of doubt, the death of Tippoo, the bodies were ordered to be dragged out, and the killedar and two other persons were desired to examine them one after another. This, however, appeared endless; and, as it was now becoming dark, a light was procured, and I accompanied the killedar into the gateway. During the search, we discovered a wounded person lying under the Sultan's palanquin; this man was afterwards ascertained to be Rajah

* On the authority of General Harris's private Journal, and of Colonel Gurwood's 'Wellington Dispatches,' I omit, as altogether fabulous, two or three circumstances relating to Colonel Wellesley, which the late Mr. Theodore Hook imprudently inserted in his 'Life of General Sir David Baird.' It appears that these circumstances were never heard of until years after the siege of Seringapatam. These stories are all cast in an old type. We have seen in French books, and have heard from French lips, tales about young Buonaparte skulking at the siege of Toulon.

Khan, one of Tippoo's confidential servants. He had attended his master during the whole of the day, and, on being made acquainted with the object of our search, pointed out the spot where the Sultan had fallen. By a faint, glimmering light, it was difficult for the killedar to recognise the features; but the body being brought out, and satisfactorily proved to be that of the Sultan, was conveyed in a palanquin to the palace, where it was again recognised by the eunuchs and other servants of the family. When Tippoo was first brought from under the gateway his eyes were open, and his body was so warm that for a few moments Colonel Wellesley and myself were doubtful whether he was not alive. On feeling his pulse and heart, that doubt was removed. He had four wounds; three in the body, and one in the temple."*

Our loss, during the siege and storm, was found to be greater than had been anticipated. It amounted to sixty-seven officers, and 803 British soldiers, in killed and wounded; and 539 natives, in killed and wounded. Though joined by other troops, General Harris had never more than 20,000 men actually occupied in the siege, and the divisions which carried the place did not count many more than 4,000 men. The severity of their loss infuriated our soldiery. When the confusion began to subside, General Baird desired to be relieved, and Colonel Wellesley, being next on the roster, was ordered to take the command of the place. This is the simple explanation of facts which have been misrepresented by malice and ignorance. General Baird had certainly not restored order; the troops were plundering the houses of the town, and committing those other excesses which too often accompany or follow the operation of storming. It is amusing, however, to observe that one of our great Captain's first cares, as commandant of Seringapatam, was about certain wild beasts which Tippoo "the Tiger" had kept as pets in his palace. On the morning of the 5th of May, he wrote to General Harris:—"There are some tigers here, which I wish Meer Allum would send for, or else I must give orders to have them shot, as there is no food for them, and nobody to attend to them, and they are getting violent." A little later in the day, he wrote to Harris:—"I wish you would send the provost here, and put him under my orders.

* Major Allan's own account, as given by Colonel Beatson, in 'Narrative of the Operations of the Army under Lieutenant-General Harris, and of the Siege of Seringapatam.'

Until some of the plunderers are hanged, it is vain to expect to stop the plunder." On the afternoon of the same day, he despatched another note, saying,—"Things are better than they were, but they are still very bad; and, until the provost executes three or four people, it is impossible to expect order, or, indeed, safety." But on the morning of the 6th he was enabled to write to his commander:—"Plunder is stopped, the fires are all extinguished, and the inhabitants are returning to their houses fast. I am now employed in burying the dead." His exertions had been incessant, and his humanity to the inhabitants could not have been surpassed. He went himself to the houses of the principal families, and posted guards to take care of them. The provost-marshal had hanged four marauders, and an end had been thereby put to plundering.*

A few days after, General Harris directed a regular garrison for Seringapatam, and appointed Colonel Wellesley to the command of it; and the Governor-General afterwards appointed him governor of that part of the Mysore territory which was placed under British authority and protection. It is at this time that the correspondence contained in the 'Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington,' lately published, begins.

During several years that he held the command in Mysore, he was fully occupied in organizing the civil and military administration of the country; and in the execution of this task he improved his natural talents for business, military and civil, in all their details, and displayed that quickness of perception, and that sagacity and self-command, which have characterized him throughout the whole course of his military career. From the beginning, also, he paid particular attention to the wants of his soldiers, to the regularity of the supply of provisions, to the management of the hospitals, and to all the particulars of the commissariat and quartermaster-general's departments, which constitute half the business of an army, and, to use his own words, if neglected, "misfortune and disgrace will be the result." In the mean time also, by his justice and humanity, and the strict discipline that he maintained among the troops, he acquired the confidence of the native population of Seringapatam, who, some years after, on his return from the campaign of Assaye, presented to him an affecting address, in which "they implored the God of all castes and of all nations to hear their constant prayer, that, whenever

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. i.

greater affairs might call him away from them, to bestow on him health, glory, and happiness." *

"To this hour," says Captain Moyle Sherer (who wrote about twenty-two years ago), "the memory of all these services, and more particularly of those which he rendered to the terrified and desolate natives in the moment of our triumph and their distress, is cherished by the aged inhabitants of Seringapatam with a grateful feeling, with which we are unwilling to disconnect the after-successes of Colonel Wellesley's life." †

The Colonel had not long been military commandant of Seringapatam, ere he devoted his attention to the apparently alien subject of finance, coinage, and exchanges, and prepared a paper, in which he gave proof that he had studied the subjects, and that he "was not less able to project a measure of finance in the closet, than to guide a column in the field." This aptitude for business had been remarked before by those who enjoyed his intimacy; and his brother, the Earl of Mornington, is reported to have said,—"I believe Arthur's great strength to be rather in the civil than in the military line." As a specimen of the versatility of his talents and of his financial abilities, and at the same time of his general plain idiomatic style, I give, nearly at full length, the following letter; merely premising, that some of our officers wanted to fix the value of money in a way as unwise and impracticable, as it would have been arbitrary:—

To Lieutenant-Colonel Close.

"Seringapatam, Dec. 28, 1799.

"My dear Colonel, ...

"I have written to Campbell a long letter about the nerrick (rate) of exchange, in which I have endeavoured to explain the principles of the whole system of shroffing (banking), against the evils of which his regulations are to guard. From what I am going to mention to you, however, I am afraid that if the nerrick at Bangalore is permanently fixed,

* 'Dispatches,' vol. iii. p. 420. André Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke of Wellington.'

† Captain (afterwards Major) Sherer spoke thus of his own knowledge. He had served in India, as well as under the Duke in the Peninsular war. I knew him well in 1830, when he was publishing his Military Memoirs of the Duke; and I would take even this faint opportunity of recording my respect for a brave, humane, accomplished, and *sincerely devout officer*, whose too great susceptibility made him the victim of the most awful malady that can afflict human nature.

I must loosen my system here, and must allow the exchange to fluctuate. . . . . .

"In all the conversations which you and I have had upon this intricate subject, we have agreed that the shroff (banker) derived a profit only by fluctuations. It is, therefore, clear that in Seringapatam there is no, or but little, profit; and that there would be no shroffs here, if they did not find one elsewhere, or that they would combine to force me to allow the exchange to fluctuate. I have lately made inquiries upon the subject, and I find that the great shroffs* here have houses at Bangalore, at Sera, and at the principal places on the Malabar coasts, and they make their profit by the fluctuation at those places.

"Seringapatam is a place of great security, where there is much trade, and, of course, exchange of money. In order to have this security, the shroffs forego the advantages which they would derive upon the fluctuation in the exchange; and they have all the advantages of the fluctuation at places at no great distance, where the exchange is not fixed. But fix that exchange, and there is an end of their means of livelihood; and, of course, they must either abandon the trade entirely, or force me to allow a fluctuation in the place where they carry it on.

"I doubt whether the destruction of our fixed nerrick at Seringapatam will not be an inconvenience to the country, as well as to us; and therefore nothing ought to be done which can endanger it.

"Let me know your opinion upon this subject. There is no reason, however, why Campbell should not now alter the nerrick, so as to make it more convenient to Purneah.

"One of the principles resulting from the position that the shroff's profit is made by fluctuation is, that if the exchange is fixed, it is immaterial what proportions of gold, silver, and copper are exchanged for one another. The Company's exchange, therefore, is as convenient as any other, and as near the standard relative value of the three metals; and as the fixation of the nerrick was readily adopted by the shroffs in Seringapatam, in the same manner, if the exchange is allowed to fluctuate from month to month in any place, provided the shroffs can know in one month what value, relatively to each other, the different coins in use will bear in the next, it is immaterial to them what the value is.

* *Shroff*, originally a Persian word, is only a modification of the well-known Turkish word *seraff* (banker). *Shroff* appears to be peculiar to Southern India. At this time the bankers in Bengal were called *sëïts*.

By means of their correspondents and connections in other places, they will be prepared for, and will gain by it.

"What I should recommend would be, that Campbell should fix a reasonable nerrick, and inform the shroffs that in fifteen days that shall have effect; and then fix another, which he must likewise communicate to them, and inform them that that must have effect in the following month. Thus he will free himself from a part of the grievance felt, at the same time that his operations will not affect us here. I shall not relieve your cavalry for some time.

"Believe me, &c.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY." *

"Lieutenant-Colonel Close."

Early in the year 1800, Colonel Wellesley was called from these peaceful operations into the field, by a daring robber-chief, named Doondiah Waugh. This man, of Patan or Mahratta origin, had served in the armies of Hyder and Tippoo. He had deserted the Mysoreans during their war with Lord Cornwallis in 1790, and had placed himself at the head of a fierce and numerous body of banditti in the wild country near the Toombudra river. By stratagem Tippoo had caught him, and he was immured in one of the dungeons of Seringapatam when we took the place. On the very day of the assault he was imprudently released by some of our soldiers, together with other prisoners, who might claim a better right to the liberty. Returning to his old avocations of plunder and murder, he was joined by some of Tippoo's disbanded cavalry, by his former associates, and by other desperate men. He obtained and kept possession of some of the principal towns in Bednore, and soon made himself formidable in that fertile country and the neighbouring territories. With a weak enemy to contend with, Dhoondiah, like Hyder, might have founded a royal dynasty. But Lieutenant-Colonel Dalrymple and Colonel Stevenson were sent against him with some light infantry and some light horse, and by the middle of August 1799, the banditti and their chief had been cut up, or driven out of Bednore. But Dhoondiah, having fled across the frontier of the Mahratta territory, which Lord Mornington would not at present allow to be violated, found friends and sympathizers among the Mahrattas, and soon reappeared in the field of carnage, stronger than before. The various operations against him cost Wellesley more trouble and exertion, and exposed him

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. i. p. 56. Edition of 1837.

to more personal danger, than any of his campaigns against regular armies. In February 1800, a fellow waited upon him, at Seringapatam, and informed him that he had come from the Mahratta country with a gang engaged by Dhoondiah to murder him, or carry him off when he should go out hunting. He desired the robber to go and join his gang again, and promised him a good reward if he would enable him to surprise and capture them; but to show how little he feared the gang, he went out hunting as usual on the morrow. One of his aides-de-camp fancied he saw some twenty men on horseback, lurking about the jungle; but if the robbers were really there, they did nothing. By active movements, some small bands were soon surprised, but still the force of the banditti increased and swelled. "Nothing," says Captain Sherer, "is more remarkable in India than the magic growth of a predatory force. A single adventurer, with no purse, no possession but horse and sword, if he has once rode at the head of a body of freebooters, and got a name for activity and fortune, is sure to be sought out and followed by all whose feet are 'swift to shed blood, and to divide the spoil.' The speck, scarcely visible or noticed in the far distance, approaches, and, behold, a heavy cloud, black with the menace of destruction! Thus, Dhoondiah rode south again with 5,000 horse, and threatened the frontier of Mysore." The robber-chief had by this time assumed the royal title, and in extra or double style, for he called himself "The King of the Two Worlds." This was in the month of April, when Colonel Wellesley was absent on the Malabar coast, but a force was immediately ordered to take the field, and he was appointed to the command of it. At the end of May, when the troops were ready, he wrote to his brother, the Governor-general:—"Dhoondiah is certainly a despicable enemy, but from circumstances he is one against whom we have been obliged to make a formidable preparation. It is absolutely necessary to the peace of this country, and of Canara and Malabar, that that man should be given up to us; and I doubt not that before now you will have made a demand for him upon the government of Poona. If we do not get him, we must expect a general insurrection of all the discontented and disaffected of these countries. I have information that letters have been received by most of them, either from him or from others written in his name, calling upon them to take the opportunity to rebel against the Company's government; and his invasion of our territory is looked to as a circumstance

favourable to their views. The destruction of this man, therefore, is absolutely necessary for our tranquillity; and nothing will be more easy, if the Mahrattas are really disposed to enter into the plan. If they are not, it will be a matter of difficulty, and it may become a question whether the whole power of the Company ought not to be turned to this one object."* It was clear, that if these robbers crossed the Toombudra river, such an injury would be inflicted on Mysore as would require years to remedy it. Wellesley, therefore, declined the popularity and the profit of an expedition to the island of Batavia, which the Governor-general proposed to him, in company with Admiral Rainier and the fleet, declaring that, if Dhoondiah were not previously disposed of, no prospect of advantage or of credit to be gained should induce him to quit Mysore.† Dhoondiah had an asylum in the Mahratta country. Wellesley recommended that the English should go through with the business until that man was given up, even though it were found necessary to cross the Mahratta frontier in pursuit of him, which could scarcely be done without risking a quarrel with the Peishwa, or the court of Poona. His brother, the Governor-general, authorized him to enter the Mahratta territory, it being evident that the Peishwa was either unable or unwilling to put down the great depredator. Our troops had been already collected on the Toombudra, there being nothing effectual to be done towards destroying Dhoondiah, or dispersing his force, without crossing that frontier river. Towards the end of June, Wellesley joined the troops, crossed the river, and proceeded in person against the freebooters. Some of the Mahratta chiefs, instead of resenting the infringement of their frontiers, now took the field, to co-operate with the English commander. But Dhoondiah and his light-footed bands moved from place to place with great rapidity, taking and plundering several towns, and distancing the British sepoys. On the 30th of June, the robbers defeated one of the Mahratta chiefs in a pitched battle. Goklah, the Mahratta chief, was killed in the affair; but the majority of his troops kept together, and seemed to be determined to continue their co-operation with the English. Proposals were made, not only at the Nizam's court at Hyderabad, but also to Wellesley, to take off Dhoondiah by means of a plot and assassination. "Such an arrangement," said the British commander, "may suit very well at Hyderabad, but I think it unbecoming an

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. i. p. 133. † Id., vol. i. p. 132.

officer at the head of a body of troops, and I, therefore, decline to have anything more to do with the business than to hold out a general encouragement. . . . Government have authorized me to offer a reward for him, and I propose to avail myself of this authority as soon as he is at all pressed, and I find that his people begin to drop off from him. This will be, in my opinion, the fittest period. To offer a public reward by proclamation for a man's life, and to make a secret bargain to have it taken away, are very different things: the one is to be done; the other, in my opinion, cannot, by an officer at the head of the troops."* Throwing a bridge over the river Werdah, and constructing a redoubt for its security, Wellesley stretched forward towards Hoondgul and Budnaghur, being joined in his route by a good many Mahrattas, who had suffered severely from Dhoondiah's rapacious and cruel banditti. That robber, however, was deemed so strong, and so confident, that it was reported on the 11th of July, that he was coming down to meet the English force. "If he does come," said Wellesley, "I shall certainly dash at him immediately." And on the 13th, Dhoondiah came down with his whole army and his guns, to within four miles of Wellesley's camp, then at Savanore. He examined the camp for some time, from a hill, and then retired. On the morning of the 14th, Wellesley threw his baggage into Savanore, and marched, with five days' provisions, as light as possible, to Hoondgul. But Dhoondiah had flitted away to the jungles, behind Dummul. He had, however, left a garrison, of about 600 men, in Hoondgul, which was surrounded and stormed on the evening of the 14th, with but trifling loss to the Company's troops. On the 15th, Wellesley marched about seventeen miles to the eastward, to another Mahratta town, which had been seized by the robbers, but which was evacuated. On the next day, the British made another long march to another town, which Dhoondiah's bands had been besieging for some weeks in the country manner. The siege was raised, and the besiegers fled towards the hills and forests. For want of sufficient cavalry, Wellesley could not pursue the fugitives; but Dhoondiah's people now began to desert him in numbers, and the Government proclamation, offering a reward of 30,000 rupees for his head, was now issued. Moreover, another corps, under Colonel Bowser, was coming up in another direction, and Colonel Stevenson was marching against the robbers from another quarter. On the night of the 19th of July, Wellesley was joined by

* 'Wellington Dispatches.'

Goklah's Mahratta Cavalry, about 1,000, strong; but, unluckily, the draught and carriage bullocks fell sick, and his progress was delayed by losing one-half of them. The British commander was employed for some days in getting fresh cattle and arranging them in departments for the service of the army. Several times, Dhoondiah was very near him, though he could not be seen. As soon as Wellesley was enabled to resume his march, he pressed forward for Dummul. This was a strong, stone fort, well built, with a dry ditch. A garrison which Dhoondiah had left in it, seemed disposed to offer a stout resistance, but on the morning of the 26th of July, Wellesley stormed the fort in three places, and carried it with a trifling loss, which was chiefly attributable to the breaking of the scaling ladders. After this success, he made three forced marches; and on the evening of the 30th of July, he surprised an encampment and the main division of Dhoondiah's forces (which was then preparing to cross over the Malpoorba river), drove into the river or destroyed everybody that was in the camp, took an elephant, several camels, bullocks, horses, and innumerable families, women, children, &c. Dhoondiah was believed not to have been with this part of his army; but Bubber Jung, one of his chief men, was in the camp, put on his armour of mail to fight, mounted his horse, and rode him into the river, where he was drowned. Great numbers met with the same fate. In all, 5,000 men were driven into the river, or otherwise destroyed. On the next morning, some English soldiers swam across the river, which was both broad and rapid, seized a boat, and got possession of the six guns on the opposite bank. Both boat and artillery were given to the Mahrattas to keep them in good humour. After this catastrophe, Dhoondiah, with the whole of his remaining force, fled along the banks of the Malpoorba towards the jungles of Kittoor and Soonda. He could not cross the river for want of boats, and was thus ascending to its source. He was closely followed by the corps of Bowser and Stevenson, which had now come up; and Wellesley and his Mahratta allies moved on the flank of these corps, so as to sweep the whole country, to the distance of fifteen miles from the river, and prevent Dhoondiah from doubling on any of his pursuers, or from fleeing between them. "If he goes into the jungles," wrote Wellesley, on the 3rd of August, "we shall easily come up with his rear; if he takes to the plain, I will cross upon him with my detachment." The robbers moved so rapidly that, though Colonel Steven-

son got close upon their tail, he could never cut it off: they went quite into the jungles, and beyond the sources of the Malpoorba, and then took to the country on the right bank of that river, and between it and the Gutpoorba. The transport of the guns and stores of a regular army, by such a route as Dhoondiah had taken, must have been attended with great difficulties. Wellesley, therefore, preferred waiting till boats could be constructed, by which he could cross the river many miles below its source. A detachment from Colonel Stevenson's corps, however, still followed Dhoondiah's track, and found the road covered with dead camels, dead bullocks, and people. Colonel Bowser got across the Malpoorba, and advanced to Shapoor, where he found sad evidence of the atrocities which had been committed by the flying robbers. Wellesley crossed the river on the 16th, "to give Dhoondiah one more run between the Gutpoorba and the Malpoorba." "I think," added he, "that I shall have a chance of picking up some baggage, &c.; but it is clear that I shall never catch him." Dhoondiah was now in a bad way, his people were starving, and leaving him, and reproaching him with their misfortunes. He was retorting, and telling them to give up their wives and daughters to the Europeans, whom they were afraid to fight. Even the Patans, the men of his own fierce race and tribe, and the hardiest and most brutal of all the adventurers in India, were leaving him fast.

At this moment, Wellesley had finished his arrangements, so as to be able to press upon him in a few days upon all points at once. Several forts were reduced along the banks of the Malpoorba, and the passes of the river most likely to be fordable were guarded by the Mahrattas. But in spite of every precaution, Dhoondiah and his followers returned suddenly to the bank, crossed the Malpoorba, which had fallen earlier in the season than was usual, at a ford a little above its juncture with the Kistna, and made off with all speed to throw themselves into the Deccan, and ravage that country of our ally and dependant. The Mahrattas who had been placed at the ford would neither face nor follow the marauders, who left behind them a great quantity of provisions, arms, ammunition, &c. Ten thousand brinjarrees were also taken by Wellesley, who must have caught Dhoondiah on the bank of the river, if the Mahrattas at the fort had done their duty. These brinjarrees gave a curious account of Dhoondiah's system. They told the English commander that the robber still had about 40,000

of their class in his interest; that nearly all the brinjarrees of this part of India, and many on the Deccan, were devoted to his service. Dhoondiah employed them, and gave them the means of living and of making good profits in the following manner:—When he approached a village or a town which was unprotected by a fort, he sent a body of horse and of brinjarrees, to levy a contribution. He took to himself all the money he could get, and gave them at a certain low price all the grain and all the cattle they could find; and they afterwards resold the grain and cattle at such profits as his camp would afford. With a trade so profitable to themselves, the brinjarrees shut their eyes to the devastations which Dhoondiah committed.

Colonel Wellesley lost no time in following up the marauders. Crossing the Malpoorba on the 3rd September, he entered the Nizam's territory on the 5th. Not a few of the Nizam's own officers betrayed him and his English allies, doing all that they could to mislead Wellesley and our other commanders. Colonel Stevenson and some Mahratta and Mogul cavalry now stretched across the country, in order to prevent a repetition of Dhoondiah's successful movement. On the 9th of September, the robber moved from a camp which he had occupied for some days towards the Kistna; but on his road he discovered Colonel Stevenson's camp, which he could not hope to pass without fighting. He therefore returned by the way he had come, and encamped about nine miles in Wellesley's front, not knowing that that part of the pursuing army was so near him. On the evening of the 10th of September, Wellesley moved forward, and met Dhoondiah and his army at a place called Conahgul. Dhoondiah was then on his march to the westward, apparently with the design of passing between the Mahratta and Mogul cavalry, and the detachments under Wellesley, which last he supposed to be fifteen miles off. Almost as soon as he was seen, he was attacked by the 19th and 25th dragoons, and 1st and 2nd regiments of native cavalry. His entire force consisted of cavalry, apparently about 5,000 strong: he was strongly posted with his rear and left flank covered by the village and rock of Conahgul. His people stood for some time with apparent firmness; but, such was the rapidity and determination of the charge made by our four regiments, that all of them soon gave way, and were pursued across the country for many miles. In order to equalize the length of their line, Wellesley had resorted to the bold expedient of forming his four

regiments, and charging *in one line*. Many of the marauders and Dhoondiah himself were killed: all the rest were dispersed and scattered in small parties over the face of the country. Part of the baggage had been left in the camp in the rear, from which Dhoondiah had moved only an hour before the battle began. All this, with elephants, camels, &c., was captured by the English cavalry. Among the baggage was found a son of Dhoondiah, a boy about four years old. He was conveyed to Wellesley's tent, where every care was taken of him.* When Sir Arthur left India, he placed in the hands of Colonel Symmonds, the judge and collector at Seringapatam, some hundred pounds for the use of the boy. When Colonel Symmonds retired from service, the Honourable Arthur Cole, the resident at the court of Mysore, took charge of him, and placed him in the rajah's service. Salabut Khan, as he was named, grew up a fine, handsome, intelligent youth.†

Thus ended the dominion and career of the King of the Two Worlds. "Had you and your regicide army been out of the way," wrote Sir Thomas Munro to Wellesley, "Dhoondiah would undoubtedly have become an independent and powerful prince, and the founder of a new dynasty of cruel and treacherous sultauns." The various letters and despatches in which Colonel Wellesley describes these operations cannot be read without the liveliest interest. Captain M. Sherer well observes,—"The pursuit and overthrow of this formidable freebooter are related with a flow of joyous good-humour, like the story of a successful hunt; and the phrases, the 'king of the world' and 'his majesty' are repeated with a playfulness, which shows the extreme pleasure Wellesley felt at his success, and the utter insignificance in which he held the peril or the glory of such a combat. At the same time, it will be seen how much of thought and foresight, what clear arrangements for supply, what prompt decision on routes, what skill in movement, what unwearied perseverance, were exhibited in the effectual performance of this service. With Colonel Wellesley duty was never a trifle. It mattered not how small or great the object to be attained. He gave to all orders that he received, his fixed intelligent attention; and to the execution of them, for the time being, all his mind. Let the youthful officer consider well this feature in the character

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. i. pp. 41-219. 'Our Indian Empire,' by C. Mac Farlane.

† He died of cholera in 1822.

we place before him. He will find it distinctive of the whole career of Wellesley."*

In the month of December of this same eventful year (1800) Colonel Wellesley was appointed to command a body of troops assembled at Trincomalee, in the island of Ceylon, for foreign service. The expedition was said to be intended either for Batavia or the Isle of France. Meantime despatches from England arrived, directing 3,000 men to be sent to the Red Sea, to act against the French in Upper Egypt, while an expedition from England sent into the Mediterranean, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, was attacking the French in Lower Egypt. No sooner had Wellesley read these despatches than he made up his mind, and, knowing that his force at Trincomalee was the only disposable force, without orders or instructions, which it was impossible to obtain in time, but for acting without which he might have been cashiered, he proceeded to act on his own responsibility, and removed his troops from Ceylon to Bombay, where they would be some thousand miles nearer the Red Sea and Egypt. He fully expected to have the command of this novel Indian expedition; but, on arriving at Bombay, he found the command was given to his senior, Major-General Sir David Baird. This was, apparently, a severe disappointment. He says, however,—and his word is not to be doubted,—that he would have accompanied Baird in a subordinate capacity, but for an illness which obliged him to remain behind. In the event, all this proved to be part of his good fortune. The great merit of the novel and bold expedition from the Indian coast to the banks of the Nile was in the original conception, and that belonged neither to Wellesley nor to Baird. Before the expedition reached Egypt the French were disposed of, and, though admirably conducted, and abounding in interest and instruction, it had no opportunity of striking a great blow. If Wellesley had gone with it, he would have lost the much more instructive and decisive campaigns against Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar; and the glory of the battle of Assaye, which first connected a prestige with his name, would (if, indeed, it had been fought at all) have belonged to another. Though he did not accompany General Baird, he gave him a copy of memoranda, which he had drawn up on the operations to be pursued on the Red Sea and in Egypt. This remarkable document shows what diligent attention he had paid to the subject—what exact informa-

* Military Memoirs.

tion about Egypt—the policy of the Mameluke bays—the real situation and prospects of the French, &c. &c.—he had managed to obtain, even while acting on such a remote and different field as India.

It was impossible for the Earl of Mornington to disapprove of the bold movement his brother had made from Ceylon; but still he thought it ought not to be set up as a precedent, and he required an official explanation of the grounds and motives which had induced the Colonel thus to act upon his own judgment, without waiting for orders. The decided, clear-headed soldier stated his motives at full length, in a remarkable letter, dated Bombay, 23rd March 1801.*

Colonel Wellesley made a second stay in Mysore of nearly two years. He was promoted to be Major-general in April 1802, and in February 1803 he was appointed to command a force assembled at Hurrihoor, near the Mahratta territory.

The Mahrattas, who had often disturbed the tranquillity of our Indian empire before the year 1803, were at this period both very threatening and very formidable. Civil war, attended by unutterable horrors, raged between the Mahratta chiefs, Holkar and Scindiah. The Peishwa, the nominal head of the Mahratta confederation, was looked upon as an instrument in the hands of the strongest. Dowlut Rao Scindiah, who ruled over Malwa and Candeish, had an army of regular infantry and artillery, which had been formed by his father, with the assistance of M. de Boigne, a native of Savoy, and was now under the direction of a French officer of the name of Perron. Scindiah exercised paramount influence over the Peishwa at Poona. Holkar, another clever, ambitious chieftain, who had long been at variance with Scindiah, suddenly crossed the Nerbudda, and marched with a large cavalry force on Poona, which he entered, after defeating the combined army of Scindiah and the Peishwa. The Peishwa escaped to the coast, and put himself under British protection, whilst Holkar placed one of his relations on the musnud of Poona. There could be no peace or security for any of the neighbouring states, so long as this state of things lasted.

The Madras army, under Lieutenant-general Stuart,

* For this admirable letter, see 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. i. p. 301, Messrs. Clowes's edition of 1837. The letter ought to be diligently studied by every young officer, as ought also the paper upon the Egyptian expedition.

was ordered to advance into the Mahratta territory, for the purpose of reinstating the Peishwa, and Major-General Wellesley was appointed to command the select corps in advance, with which he was to march rapidly upon Poona. Having received information that Holkar's people intended to burn Poona on his approach, he pushed on with the cavalry, and performing a march of sixty miles in thirty hours, reached that town on the 20th of April, and saved it from destruction. Holkar's army retired without fighting, and in the following month our ally, the Peishwa, re-entered his capital. Scindiah, however, and the Rajah of Berar, another powerful Mahratta chief, were together in the field, and Holcar was expected to join them.

The state of affairs was now more dangerous than ever, for the hollow peace of Amiens had been concluded, and the French had just recovered their Indian possessions. A great man, one that united political genius with military skill and high courage, was wanted for the crisis; and, without incurring the slightest risk of being charged with partiality, the Earl of Mornington could name his own brother. Accordingly, the Governor-General appointed General Wellesley to the chief command of all the British and allied troops serving in the territories of the Peishwa and the Nizam, with full power to direct all the political affairs of the British government in the said territories.*

"After some fruitless negotiations with Scindiah, General Wellesley marched from Poona to the north, and took by escalade the town of Ahmednuggur, which was garrisoned by Scindiah's troops. On the 24th of August he crossed the Godavery river, and entered Aurungabad on the 29th. The enemy manifested an intention to cross the river to the eastward and steal a march upon Hyderabad, but were prevented by General Wellesley marching along the left bank of the river, and placing himself between them and that city. On the 12th of September the British General was encamped twenty miles north of the Godavery. Colonel Stevenson, with the Nizam's auxiliary force, was at some distance from him. Scindiah, who had a large mass of irregular cavalry, avoided a general engagement, being afraid of British discipline, and only thought of carrying on a predatory warfare, supporting his men at the expense of the subjects of the Nizam and other allies of the English, and wearing out the British troops by continual marches

* See 'Dispatches,' Fort William, 26th and 27th of June, vol. ii. pp. 49-56, Messrs. Clowes's edition of 1837.

and partial affrays. About the middle of September General Wellesley learned that Scindiah had been reinforced by sixteen battalions of infantry, commanded by French officers, and a large train of artillery, and that the whole of his force was assembled near the banks of the Kaitna river."*

On the 21st of September, General Wellesley had a conference with Colonel Stevenson, and a combined attack on the enemy was concerted. The General and the Colonel were to advance by two parallel routes round the hills between Budnapoor and Jaulna, so as to fall at the same time upon the Mahrattas. Wellesley arrived at Naulwah on the 23rd, and there learned that Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar had moved off in the morning with all their cavalry, and that their infantry were about to follow, though, as yet, they were in camp, at the distance of six miles. He determined to march upon this infantry, and cut it up at once. Colonel Stevenson, who was then about eight miles on Wellesley's left, was informed of this intention, and directed to advance. The General moved forward with the 19th dragoons, and three regiments of native cavalry, to reconnoitre, his infantry, consisting of two British and five native battalions, following the horse at the best of their speed.

After a rapid march of about four miles, Wellesley saw, from an elevated plain, not only their infantry, but the whole force of the Mahrattas, nearly 50,000 men, encamped on the north side of the Kaitna river, the banks of which were very steep. The Mahratta right, consisting of cavalry, was about Bokerdon; their infantry corps, connected with the cavalry, and having with them ninety pieces of artillery, were encamped near the village of Assaye, or Assye.

Shout Britain for the battle of Assye,
For that was a day,
When we stood in our array,
Like the lion turn'd to bay,
And the battle-word was "Conquer or die!"†

Although the enemy were so much stronger than he had expected to find them, no thought of retreat was entertained.

* André Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke.'

† This is part of a superb Indian war-song, which celebrated Wellesley's conquests over the Mahrattas. See 'Quarterly Review,' vol. ii. p. 427. I knew the whole song in my childhood, having so often heard it sung by fellow-clansmen, and other Highlanders who had served with the Duke in these his earlier and brilliant campaigns.

Wellesley resolved to attack the infantry on its left and rear, and for that purpose he moved his little army to a ford some distance beyond the enemy's extreme left. Leaving the Mysore and other irregular cavalry to watch the Mahratta cavalry, and crossing the river with only his regular horse and infantry, he passed the ford, ascended the difficult steep bank, and formed his men in three lines, two of infantry, and the third of horse. This was effected under a brisk cannonade from the enemy's artillery. Scindiah, or the French officer who directed his movements, promptly made a corresponding change in his line, giving a new front to his infantry, which was now made to rest its right on the river, and its left upon the village of Assaye and the Juah stream, which flowed in a direction parallel with the Kaitna. The Mahrattas' numerous and well-served cannon did terrible execution among our advancing lines, knocking over men and bullocks, and completely drowning the weak sound of our scanty artillery. At one moment, such a gap was made by cannon-ball in our right, that some of the Mahratta cavalry attempted to charge through it; but the British cavalry in the third line came up, and drove back the Mahrattas with great slaughter. Finding his own artillery of little or no use (the guns could not be brought up for lack of bullocks), General Wellesley gave orders that it should be left in the rear, and that the infantry should charge with the bayonet. His steady resolute advance, in the teeth of their guns, had already awed the Mahrattas, who would not now stand to meet the collision of the bright English steel: their infantry gave way, and abandoned their terrible guns. One body of them formed again, and presented a bold front; but Lieutenant-colonel Maxwell charged them with the British cavalry, broke and dispersed them, and was killed in the moment of victory. Wellesley's sepoys having proceeded too far in pursuit, many of Scindiah's artillerymen, who had thrown themselves down among the carriages of their guns as though they were dead, got to their feet again, and turned their pieces against the rear of the advancing sepoys; and at the same time the Mahratta cavalry, which had been hovering round throughout the battle, were still near: but Maxwell's exploit speedily led to the silencing of this straggling artillery fire, and to the headlong flight of Scindiah's disciplined infantry, who went off, and left ninety pieces of cannon, nearly all brass and of the proper calibres, in the hands of the conqueror. General Wellesley led the 78th British infantry in person against the village

of Assaye, which was not cleared without a desperate combat. It was near dark night when the firing ceased. The splendid victory cost General Wellesley twenty-two officers and 386 men killed, and fifty-seven officers and 1,526 men wounded, excluding the irregular cavalry, which remained on the other side of the river, and had not been engaged: the total number of killed and wounded amounted to nearly one-third of his force. The general himself had two horses killed under him,—one shot, and the other piked: every one of his staff officers had one or two horses killed, and his orderly's head was knocked off by a cannon-ball as he rode close by his side. The enemy, who fled towards the Adjuntee Ghaut, through which they had passed into the Deccan, left 1,200 dead, and a great number badly wounded, on the field of battle.

Colonel Stevenson, who had encountered some unexpected obstacles, did not arrive at Assaye until the day after the combat, when he was immediately despatched after the flying enemy.*

While General Wellesley was defeating the Mahrattas in the south, General Lake gained a complete victory at Allyghur, in the plains of Hindostan, over another part of their force under M. Perron, which had occupied Delhi. The Mahratta power was now broken, and after several marches and countermarches, and desultory negotiations, Scindiah asked and obtained a truce at the beginning of November; but the Rajah of Berar still kept the field, and General Wellesley, coming up with him in the plains of Argaum, found Scindiah's cavalry, together with the Rajah's forces, drawn up in battle-array. The battle of Argaum was fought on the 29th of November 1803. The British line advanced in the best order; the 74th and 78th regiments were attacked by a large body of Persian mercenaries in the service of the Rajah of Berar, which was entirely destroyed. Scindiah's cavalry charged one of the Company's regiments, and was repulsed, when the whole Mahratta line retired in disorder, leaving thirty-eight pieces of cannon and all their ammunition in the hands of the British. The British cavalry pursued the enemy for several miles, taking many elephants, camels, and much baggage. Colonel Stevenson soon after took by storm the strong fort of Gawilghur, and this exploit concluded the campaign. The Rajah of Berar now sued for peace, and General Wellesley drew up the conditions of the treaty, by which the Rajah ceded to the Com-

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ii. pp. 323-6.

pany the province of Cuttack with the district of Balasore, and dismissed his European officers. Scindiah was glad to follow the example, and on the 30th of December he signed a treaty of peace, by which he ceded to the Company all the country between the Jumna and the Ganges, besides numerous forts. In the following February (1804), General Wellesley crossed the Godavery to put down the independent freebooting parties, which were carrying devastation through the West Deccan. Following them rapidly from hill to hill, he gradually dispersed them, and took their guns, ammunition, and baggage. The fatigue attending these operations was such, that General Wellesley, after a lapse of many years, still spoke of it as the most laborious service in which he had been engaged. Peace was thus restored to the peninsula of India.*

In March 1804, General Wellesley visited Bombay, where he was received with all honour. The British inhabitants of the place presented an address to him, in which they declared, with equal brevity and truth, that he was a commander, "great in the cabinet as in the field." They voted him a sword of the value of 1,000*l.*, and the officers of the army of the Deccan gave him a service of plate of the value of 2,000 guineas, with the inscription,—"Battle of Assaye, September 23rd, 1803."

But these were trifling tributes compared with the respect (the admiration falling little short of idolatry) which was paid to the statesman and soldier, not only by his companions in arms, but by all branches of the Service—by every man in India that knew his exploits, and approached his person.

Considering the climate and the seasons, his fatigues, during the Mahratta war, had been prodigious; but, happily, his constitution was vigorous and sound, and his frame admirably calculated to sustain the hardest work and the hardest living. "General Wellesley," says Captain Sherer, "was a little above the middle height, well limbed, and muscular; with little incumbrance of flesh beyond that which gives shape and manliness to the outline of the figure; with a firm tread, an erect carriage, a countenance strongly patrician, both in feature, profile, and expression, and an appearance remarkable and distinguished: few could approach him on any duty, or on any subject requiring his serious attention, without being sensible of a something strange and penetrating in his clear light eye. Nothing

* André Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke of Wellington.'

could be more simple and straightforward than the matter of what he uttered; nor did he ever in his life affect any peculiarity or pomp of manner, or rise to any coarse, weak loudness in his tone of voice. It was not so that he gave expression to excited feeling.

"It may be here with propriety observed, and it is important to the younger officers who may read this, that General Wellesley was a man temperate in all his habits; using the table, but above its pleasures: and it is not to be found on record, that he was ever *the slave* of any of those frailties, without an occasional subjection to which few men pass the fiery ordeal of a soldier's life. He was, however, much in camps; and a camp is so truly the nursery of manly virtues, that few officers advanced in life can look back upon days so unoffending, or nights of such light repose, as those passed in the ready field. To sum all up, he was a British nobleman serving his king and country with heart and hand; and while British noblemen continue to do thus, may their lands be broad, their mansions wide, and their names honoured!"

On the 24th of June 1804, General Wellesley broke up the army in the Deccan, and in the following month he returned to Seringapatam, where he received from the native inhabitants that grateful, and affecting address which has already been cited. The voice of faction could afterwards utter the calumnious falsehood, that Wellington was a merciless man—a man of iron, with no more feeling than one of his guns. But during the whole of his career in India, as afterwards in Portugal and Spain, though ever firm and just, he was invariably inclined to humanity and mercy, whenever they could be exercised without detriment to justice or to the safety of others. His despatches contain innumerable proofs of this kind disposition. The following is very characteristic in its expression:—The Mahratta Peishwa whom we had helped to restore, like most Indian princes, knew nothing of forgiveness, being "callous to everything but money and revenge." General Wellesley interposed to screen some Mahratta chiefs from his vengeance. "The war," said he, "will be eternal, if nobody is ever to be forgiven; and I certainly think that the British Government cannot intend to make *the British* troops the instruments of the Peishwa's revenge. * * * When the power of the Company is so great, little dirty passions must not be suffered to guide its measures."*

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ii.

In July 1804, our General was at Calcutta, assisting in important military deliberations. The memoranda which he then wrote on the political and military affairs of India, are full of forethought, sagacity, and practical wisdom. They fill a considerable part of the third volume of his immortal despatches—a work which is by far the best monument of his fame. In the course of the same year, he was again in the Deccan and again in Mysore. In February 1805, he repaired for the last time to Madras, and obtained leave to return to England. About the same time, his appointment by the king to be a Knight Companion of the Order of the Bath was known in India, and published in the general orders. This honour was conferred "in consideration of the eminent and brilliant services of Major-general Wellesley," and it had been determined "that his creation and investiture shall not wait for his succession to a regular vacancy therein."* In the following month of March, the thanks of both houses of parliament for his services were likewise published in the general orders. On the 9th of that month he took leave of his army, in a brief and manly address, dated from Fort St. George. After expressing the regret he felt in bidding farewell to officers and troops with whom he had served so long, he said,—

"Upon every occasion, whether in garrison or in the field, the Major-general has had reason to be satisfied with their conduct: he once more returns them his thanks, and assures them that he shall never forget their services, or cease to feel a lively interest in whatever may concern them.

"He earnestly recommends to the officers of the army never to lose sight of the general principles of the military service, to preserve the discipline of the troops, and to encourage in their respective corps the spirit and sentiments of gentlemen and of soldiers, as the most certain road to the attainment of everything that is great in their profession."

These were not *pro formâ* words, but deeply-felt sentiments. Whenever, in after life, this illustrious man found an officer or soldier who had served worthily under him in India, he gave some substantial proof that he had not ceased to feel the lively interest which he had professed.

Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in England in September 1805. Again his rest was short. In November of the same year he was sent to Hanover, with the command of a brigade in the expedition under Lord Cathcart, which

* Letter of Lord Camden to the Governor-General.

was intended to make a diversion, while France was engaged, on the banks of the Danube, against Russia and Austria. The wretched policy, the mean tergiversation of the Prussian cabinet, and the victory obtained by Buonaparte at Austerlitz in the month of December, disconcerted the plans of the coalition, and the English returned from Hanover to England in February 1806, without having had any opportunity of gaining laurels.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was now appointed to the command of a brigade of infantry quartered at Hastings. In the preceding month of January, on the death of the Marquis Cornwallis, he had been made colonel of his own highly-prized 33rd regiment. In the same year he was elected member for the borough of Rye, and from his seat in the House of Commons he ably defended the Indian administration of his brother, which was furiously assailed in parliament by a crazy person of the name of Paull, who had begun life as a tailor in Perth, but who had subsequently been some years in India.

In April 1807, Sir Arthur was appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, and in that capacity sworn a member of his Majesty's Privy Council. He accepted this civil appointment on the condition that it should not interfere with his military promotion or pursuits. The Duke of Richmond was Lord-Lieutenant of that part of the United Kingdom. Sir Arthur was received with delight by his old friends in Ireland. I regret that I have no better authority (in print) than Sir Jonah Barrington, who says—"he was still in all material traits Arthur Wellesley, but it was Arthur Wellesley judiciously improved." Common report, however, affirms that he had the same unassuming carriage as when he was only a young aide-de-camp; that he was most attentive to business; that his public acts were distinguished by impartiality and good sense, and that he introduced several valuable reforms—particularly in the police of Dublin.

But he could not long be spared for the discharge of duties like these. In August of the same year (1807) he was appointed to a command in the expedition sent to Copenhagen, under Lord Cathcart and Admiral Gambier, having for his companions and coadjutors General Lord Rosslyn, Major-general Robert Mac Farlane, and his able and fast friend Lieutenant-colonel George Murray, who acted as Quartermaster-general, and was qualifying himself for that most important post, the duties of which he afterwards performed so admirably in the Spanish peninsula.

On the 29th of August, General Wellesley's division attacked the Danish troops in a strong entrenched position at Kioge, carried their works, entered the town of Kioge, and took a large military store, with nearly 1,200 prisoners. This was the only action of any importance by land. The bombardment of Copenhagen — which followed the affair of Kioge—having induced the crowned prince of Denmark to listen to terms, General Wellesley, with Lieutenant-colonel Murray and Sir Home Popham, captain of the fleet, was appointed by Lord Catheart to draw up the articles of the capitulation. These articles were agreed to by the Danish government on the 7th of September; and the Danish fleet and naval stores—which must otherwise have fallen into the clutches of the French—were delivered to the British Government, to be kept until the conclusion of a general peace. Sir A. Wellesley returned to England with this very successful expedition, and for a short time resumed his duties as chief secretary for Ireland. In the following February (1808) he received, in his place in the Commons, the thanks of that house for his important services in Denmark.

By this time a military force was assembled at Cork, and ready to move wherever its services might be required. It had been originally intended to act against the Spanish colonies in South America, for Spain had been forced into an alliance with France, and had been several years at open war with England But the unprincipled invasion of Spain and Portugal by Buonaparte, his kidnapping the Spanish royal family, and the insults offered by his soldiery to the people of the Peninsula, kindled a consuming fire in those countries, and gave a new destination to this English force. The enraged Spaniards sent to London to implore for assistance. Juntas, or local governments, were formed, and peace was proclaimed between Spain and England. It was then resolved to send the military force assembled at Cork to the coast of the Peninsula, and Sir Arthur, who had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-general in April, was appointed in June to take the command. The force consisted of about 9,000 infantry, and one regiment of light dragoons—the 20th. A small army this to face the strong legions of the French, who were all flushed with victory and the growing confidence that they were invincible. But the British Government promised early reinforcements to the extent of 10,000 more men.

Sir Arthur was in Dublin when (on or about the 3rd of

July)* he received his final instructions from Lord Castlereagh, who nobly supported him in the arduous career upon which he was now entering, and who proved himself a far better war minister than any England had known for many years. With his habitual promptitude, the General prepared for an immediate departure. He wrote to his friend Major-general Hill,—"I rejoice extremely at the prospect I have of serving again with you, and I hope we shall have *more to do* than we had on the last occasion on which we were together. I propose to leave town (Dublin) for Cork. * * * * * Pray, let me hear from you, and acquaint me with all your wants, and whether I can do anything for you here. You will readily believe that I have plenty to do in closing a civil government in such a manner as that I may give it up, and then in taking the command of a corps for service; but I shall not fail to attend to whatever you may write to me."† By the 9th of July he had completed the embarkation of the troops, but contrary winds delayed the departure until the 12th. On the 13th, the fleet was clear of the Irish coast, and then Sir Arthur parted company with it, sailing in the *Crocodile* frigate for Corunna.

While he is crossing the Bay of Biscay a few words may be said on the nature of the struggle in which he was to engage, and of the prevailing temper of the Spaniards. The Peninsula had now become nothing less than the field on which the great question was to be decided,—whether France, through Napoleon Buonaparte and his marshals and generals, was to govern Europe, and dictate as she pleased to all other states—England included? The Spanish people were in many respects fitted for the struggle. And here I quote with pleasure a passage written by an officer in our army, who knows that people well, and who had previously witnessed the horrors of French warfare in other countries. "They (the Spaniards) were determined even to obstinacy, enduring of privation, proud and reserved, prone to enthusiasm, and, generally speaking, ignorant of worldly affairs. This last deficiency assisted them greatly in their resistance. If they had been better acquainted with the history of Europe; if they had been more calculating, commercial, and refined, they might have shrunk from the fearful contest. They might have paused ere they attempted to face, with

* Viscount Castlereagh's letter is dated Downing-street, June 30th. We had then neither railways nor steam-boats, and the letter was probably three days *en route*.

† 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 13.

their raw battalions, those fierce and well-appointed phalanxes which had fought and conquered in a hundred pitched battles, and at whose encounter the splendid armies of Austria, Russia, and Prussia had been dissolved as by the touch of a magician's wand. If they had known the stern determination of Napoleon to carry his point at any cost, and the merciless devotedness of his officers and soldiers to his absolute will; if they had thought beforehand of the blood, the tears, and the calamities that would cover their peaceful valleys and sunny plains, of their towns taken by storm, of their villages given up to the flames, of the shrieks of despair of their outraged wives and daughters, hearts as stout as theirs might have paused ere they drew upon themselves the awful visitation of the French. Luckily for the common cause of mankind, luckily in the end for Spain as a country, and for England too, Spanish pride and Spanish indifference thought not of these things; they thought only of the hated invader, their hereditary enemy, who had insidiously introduced himself into their cities and fortresses, who had shamefully abused their confidence: and they felt that he must be driven from the Spanish soil, for France and Spain could not commune together south of the Pyrenees."* Unfortunately for the Spanish people, many of their leaders were unworthy of taking the lead.

Sir Arthur Wellesley reached Coruña on the 20th of July, and, according to Lord Castlereagh's instructions, he put himself in immediate communication with the Junta of Gallicia. The Spanish deputies, who had gone to England from the Asturias and Gallicia, had requested the employment of an auxiliary force, to effect a diversion, by landing on some point of the coast of Portugal, in which kingdom the insurrection had not then begun. Their own native provinces, the mountainous regions of the Asturias and Gallicia, were as yet untouched by the French; they formed, or were thought to form, the main strength of the Spanish patriots in the north; and the deputies, for their own immediate use, had asked only for arms and money. Some doubts were reasonably entertained by the British Government whether the Asturians and Gallicians would make the best use of these succours, and whether Spanish armies and irregular tumultuary levies could drive the French out of the Peninsula, without the assistance of a disciplined English army.

Sir Arthur, in his first conferences with the Junta of

* André Vicusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.'

Gallicia, found those Spaniards full of confidence. Although the battle of Rio Seco had been lost, and the battle of Baylen not yet won, they declined the assistance of a British auxiliary force; but they advised General Wellesley to land in Portugal, to rescue that kingdom from the French, and thus open a regular communication between the north and south of Spain. He was assured that in many places detachments of the French had been defeated by the Spanish people, and that whole armies of them would soon be annihilated. Some money, which he brought with him and gave them, elated the members of the Junta still more. He could not see, either in them or in the inhabitants of the town, any symptom of alarm, or any doubt of their final success.* The Junta said that they could put any number of men into the field, if they were only amply provided with money and arms. His quick eye saw, at a glance, that a great deal more was wanting than arms and money, and that the disinclination to receive the assistance of British troops was founded, in a great degree, on Spanish pride, and on the objection to give the command of their own troops to British officers, although it was but too apparent that they had few or no capable Spanish officers. It was this objection, this pride, which led to many subsequent reverses and disgraces in the field, and which rendered the Spanish armies for a long time of little or no avail. The Portuguese showed less pride and more docility, and thereby rapidly became excellent troops in the hands of British officers, and under the command of the great British general. Sir Arthur thought that Buonaparte would now carry on his operations by means of large armies, and would make every effort to gain possession of the northern provinces of Spain, which could be done only by the invasion and possession of the Asturias; and that, therefore, our Government ought to direct its attention more particularly to that important point, and endeavour to prevail upon the Asturians to receive a body of our troops. No chance or contingency escaped him; he thought it possible that, if Buonaparte found it impracticable to penetrate by land, he would make some sudden effort to reach the Asturias by sea; and he therefore recommended the reinforcing of the English squadron on that coast. He suggested also to the Junta at Coruña to fit out the Spanish ships at Ferrol for this service; but they declined the measure. He saw all the difficulties of the case in their true light, and at once told

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. pp. 35-41.

our ministers, who were far too sanguine, and who appear to have believed that the Spaniards had far more resources than they possessed, that they must assist all the Spanish provinces with money, arms, and ammunition. He referred to the great division of political power caused by the establishment of so many Juntas; but he was not quite certain that each of the kingdoms of Spain should not be governed by its own Junta, and he was convinced that the general zeal and exertions of each were greater at present than they would be if the whole kingdom were under the direction of one body.* The Junta at Coruña recommended him not to land at Lisbon, or in the neighbourhood of the French army. His own views, and his general instructions, were in favour of a landing in Portugal; but he determined not to fix upon the spot until he obtained more accurate information.

On the night of the 21st of July, he set sail from Coruña, to look after the transports and the fleet that were conveying his army. The fleet joined him the next day at sea, and he then sailed instantly for Oporto, where he arrived on the 24th. By this time, Oporto and the neighbourhood were in full insurrection; and he found that the warlike bishop had gathered together about 3,000 men, full of ardour, but badly armed and equipped. He also learned from the bishop, that about 5,000 Portuguese regular troops were stationed at Coimbra, on the Mondego river, and that there were about 12,000 peasants, who only wanted arming, clothing, and disciplining. Some of the more regular levies had got a thousand muskets from the English fleet; but others, of the same class, had no fire-arms except fowlingpieces. Of a corps of Spanish infantry, which ought to have been at Oporto, he could hear nothing, except that it had been stopped on the frontier, and that whether it would come at all was doubtful. Having made arrangements with the Bishop of Oporto for a supply of mules and horses, General Wellesley sailed to the south as far as the Tagus, to get fresh and correcter information as to the strength and position of the French troops in and near Lisbon.

Nothing was left to hazard, or to that second and third-hand information which had so often misled inferior commanders.† When he had obtained ample knowledge of the strength and disposition of Junot's forces, he fixed upon

* Despatches to Viscount Castlereagh, in 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv.

† 'Pictorial History of England,' 'History of the Reign of Geo. III.' by G. L. Craik and C. Mac Farlane. Vol. iv.

Mondego Bay as his proper landing-place. The small town and fort of Figueira, on the southern bank of the Mondego, had been carried by the Portuguese insurgents, and were now occupied by 300 marines belonging to the English fleet, and higher up the river, at Coimbra, were posted the 5,000 Portuguese regulars.

On the 30th of July, General Wellesley anchored in the bay; and on the 1st of August, the troops were landed near the town of Figueira, according to orders and rules most precisely laid down by the General. On the 5th of August, General Spencer joined from Cadiz, with about 4,000 men, thus raising the entire force, under Sir Arthur's command, to 13,000 foot, and 400 or 500 cavalry; but 150 of the 20th Light Dragoons were dismounted.*

Having landed our hero on the scene of his glory—on the ground where he was first to measure swords with the invincible French,—I close this Book.

BOOK II.

The army which took the field from the shore of Mondego Bay, was in many respects very different from that in which Wellesley had served in the Netherlands. Although there yet remained something to do (particularly in the commissariat department), there had been great improvements since the Duke of York's unfortunate campaigns in 1794-5. General Jarrey, an old French officer and royalist emigrant, who had served under Frederic the Great, had published his works on the marching of armies, castrametation, and other points; and his good lessons had not been thrown away. The military academy at Marlow had been opened, and had sent forth accomplished pupils. Even as early as the year 1801, in Sir Ralph Abercrombie's Egyptian expedition, the French had been forcibly struck by the superior style of our operations; and the science and thorough efficiency of most of our engineers and staff-officers had challenged their admiration. The main strength of every army, and the pride of our own—our infantry—was always

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. pp. 50-66.

an infantry to beat the world when properly commanded; and now there was small chance of that blundering ignorance and fatuity which, since the days of the great Duke of Marlborough, had so often made the valour and all the high qualities of the British soldier ineffectual.

The French force in Portugal, under Junot, consisted of about 17,000 men, 3,000 of whom were shut up in garrisons at Almeida, Elvas, Setubal, and other places. There, therefore, remained about 14,000 men for the defence of Lisbon. Junot's communications with the French in Spain were cut off, for, since the surrender of Dupont, (at Baylen) the Spanish patriots were masters of Andalusia and Estremadura, and in old Castile the French corps had not advanced westward farther than Benavente, being observed and checked by the Spanish army of Gallicia. About the same time the French, weakened and alarmed by the surrender of Dupont with his entire division, hastily abandoned Madrid, and retired to the Ebro. A clear stage was, therefore, left for the contest in Portugal between Wellesley and Junot, whose respective forces, disposable for the field, were nearly equal. But the French had the advantage of a considerable body of cavalry, while the English were very weak in that arm.

Our advanced guard moved from their ground upon the Mondego on the 9th of August, taking the route to Lisbon, and was followed on the 10th by the main body of the army. Though provisions were not overabundant, and the heat was somewhat oppressive, all the men were in high spirits; they had confidence in their great leader and in their officers; and the brilliant, glowing atmosphere, and the novelty and beauty of the scenery, enlivened the hearts of the dullest. "Upon this wide theatre of fierce and sanguinary warfare was now first heard the careless whistle and the cheerful laughter of the English soldier. He, stranger alike to the violent and vindictive feelings which animated the invader and the inhabitant, marched gaily forward, looking for a combat as for some brave pastime."*

On the 10th of August our advanced-guard entered the town of Leiria, where it found General Freire with his Portuguese force of 5,000 men. Freire, after allowing his troops to appropriate to themselves the stores which, by an agreement between the Junta of Oporto and Sir Arthur, were intended for the English, loudly demanded that his corps should henceforth be furnished with provisions by Sir

* Captain Moyle Sherer's 'Military Memoirs.'

Arthur's commissariat! This was, indeed, a preposterous demand to make to a foreign general, who had just landed his troops, and who must depend for their support mainly on such provisions as the country which he had come to deliver could afford to sell him for money.* Sir Arthur refused compliance, and thereupon Freire refused to advance with the English. With much difficulty he was afterwards prevailed upon to allow about 1,600 of his men to join Sir Arthur: with the rest Freire remained behind at Leiria. As the English advanced, the insurrection became general throughout the country, but, for want of arms, the people could do nothing against the French, who perpetrated abominable massacres at Evora, Guarda, Villaviçosa, and other places.

Junot having abandoned the provinces, keeping only the fortresses of Elvas and Almeida, now collected his forces in the neighbourhood of Lisbon. He sent a division of about 5,000 men, under Delaborde, towards Leiria, to keep the English in check; and he ordered Loison, who had returned from a butchering expedition into Alemtejo, and had crossed the Tagus at Abrantes, to join Delaborde at Leiria. But the rapid advance of Wellesley obliged Delaborde to fall back before he could be joined again by Loison.

Delaborde, however, determined to make a stand *alone* in the favourable position of Roliça, hoping every moment to see Loison appear on his right. It was pleasant and picturesque ground this on which our first affair in the Peninsula took place. The romantic village of Roliça, with its vines, olive groves, and quiet gardens, stands upon an eminence at the head of that valley, in the midst of which, distant about eight miles, rises the insulated hill Obidos, crowned by an old Moorish fort. In front of Roliça, upon a small plain, on the table-land, Laborde drew up his division in order of defence. The favourable points upon the hills on either side, and in the valley below, were occupied by his outposts. Behind him, scarcely a mile to the rear, the steep and difficult ridge of Zambugeira offered a second position parallel to the first, and stronger than it. The valley leading from Obidos to Roliça is walled in on the left by rocks and rude heights, rising one above the other till they are finally lost in the lofty dark summits of the Sierra de Baragueda.† Up this valley, General Wel-

* A. Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.' 'Wellington Dispatches.'
† Captain Moyle Sherer.

lesley, after driving the French pickets from Obidos, marched on the 17th to attack Delaborde, with 9,000 men, all British troops, except 250 Portuguese cavalry and 400 light troops of that nation. But at the same time, two columns of attack were moving against the French; that on the left was conducted by General Ferguson along the lower ridges of the Sierra de Baragueda, being destined to turn the right of Delaborde's position, and interpose between him and the expected division of Loison: the column on the right, consisting of 1,000 Portuguese foot, and fifty of their horse, was led by Colonel Trant, and intended to menace the left flank of the French. From his first position in front of Roliça, Delaborde was soon driven with loss. The brisk attack of the brigades of Hill and Nightingale, and the skilful disposition which had caused both his flanks to be menaced at the same moment, determined his retreat.

Covered by his cavalry, Delaborde moved rapidly, and in good order, to his second line of defence, the steep and difficult ridge of Zambugeira, which could be approached only by dark ravines, and steep rugged pathways winding among rocks and briars; but the ridge, so short and narrow that it scarcely afforded moving room to the assailers and the assailed, was gained by the British 9th and 29th, who were soon supported by other troops from our rear, and favoured by another threatening movement on the French flank. Delaborde could hold that height no longer: though wounded himself, he rallied his men, and attempted to make another stand near a village, but he was soon driven thence, and leaving three of his guns upon the field, and marching all night, he withdrew for Torres Vedras, where he was joined by Loison's corps: he was well protected on the retreat by his cavalry; and Sir Arthur was too weak in that arm to follow him up. We lost two lieutenant-colonels, one of them the brave son of a brave father,* and about 480 men in killed and wounded. The loss of the French was supposed to be above 600. "But," says a writer, who never confidently makes an incorrect assertion, "it must be observed here, once for all, that the losses of the French throughout the war were never accurately known, as they published no returns, whilst the British official returns of killed, wounded, and prisoners, made by the respective officers in command of regiments after a battle, were always

* This was Colonel Lake, son of Lord Lake, the hero of Laswarree, and of other battles in India.

published in the 'Gazette.' In fact, there were no means in France, under Napoleon, of knowing the truth concerning their armies abroad; and this is one of the many differences between the two services."*

On the 18th, General Wellesley advanced to Lourinha, keeping along the coast road leading to Mafra. On the 19th, he moved on to Vimeira, where he was joined the next day by Generals Anstruther and Ackland, with two brigades just arrived on the coast from England, and which raised his force to about 17,000 British, besides 1,600 Portuguese. But at this critical moment, Sir Arthur was superseded in the command!

In spite of the discouraging voice of the very unpatriotic opposition, ministers at home had become sensible of the propitious appearance of affairs in the Peninsula, and were fully determined to increase the army employed in Portugal; but upon these very grounds they also determined to entrust the chief command to some officer higher or more ancient in the service than Sir Arthur Wellesley. This was quite according to the wheel of routine, which had gone far to grind down all genius and spirit in the superior classes of the officers of our army. In India, at Copenhagen, even in this opening campaign in Portugal, Wellesley had given the highest proofs of military genius; but there were generals in the service much more ancient than he. It might have happened that this active, indefatigable man, whose physical powers were, in their kind, as perfect as his intellectual qualities, should have been superseded by a worn-out old man, incapable of bearing the heat of the climate, or of sitting three hours consecutively on horseback.†

As soon as it was resolved to raise this army to 30,000 men, ministers gave the chief command to Lieutenant-General Sir Hew Dalrymple, who was at Gibraltar, acting as governor in that fortress and colony, and they appointed Sir Harry Burrard to be Sir Hew's second in command, leaving Sir John Moore, Sir Arthur Wellesley, and Generals J. Hope, Sir E. Paget, and Mackenzie Frazer to command respective divisions of the army. Wellesley was thus reduced from first to fourth. Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir John Moore were both officers of great merit, and generous, high-minded men; but quite so much could not be said of Sir Harry Burrard; and the very best of the

* André Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.'

† 'Pictorial History of England,' vol. iv., Reign of George III.

three, Sir John Moore, was immeasurably inferior to Sir Arthur Wellesley. Accidents, and the order in which the new appointed generals arrived, made a bad scheme worse. Sir Harry Burrard came first; on the evening of the 20th he came into Maceira Bay, near Vimeira. Sir Arthur immediately went on board, and reported to Sir Harry the situation of the army, and his own intended plan of operation, which was to continue marching along the coast road as far as Mafra, thus turning the strong position which Delaborde and Loison had taken at Torres Vedras, and by this means obliging the French either to give battle, or retreat to Lisbon under great disadvantages. No plan could have been better; no reinforcements were wanting. There was, probably, not a man or an officer in the army but was anxious to advance. Sir Harry Burrard, however, was of opinion that no further advance ought to be made until the arrival of the reinforcements under Sir John Moore. But the enemy, in the mean time, was bringing the question to a speedy solution.

That very night there rose the cry that the French were coming. Having posted his army in excellent positions, in the valley of Vimeira, and on the hills round the village, General Wellesley was retiring to rest, when, at the hour of midnight, a German officer of dragoons galloped into the camp, and reported that Junot was advancing to the attack, at the head of 20,000 men, and was only one hour's march distant. Undisturbed by this inflated report, Sir Arthur merely sent out patrols, and warned the guards and pickets to be on the alert. "It may be remarked, in passing," says Capt. M. Sherer, "that no general ever received reports with such calm caution as Sir Arthur Wellesley. Suddenly awaked, he would hear an alarming account from the front with a quiet, and—to many a bustling intelligent officer — a provoking coolness, and turn again to his sleep as before. Few, if any, are the instances, during the war, of his putting the troops under arms by night, or disappointing them unnecessarily of one hour of repose. An hour before dawn, the British, when near an enemy, are always under arms." Thus our men were never flurried or hurried, but kept cool, with all their vigour in them, for the moment of battle. Nor did Sir Arthur ever exhaust the strength of his people by making complicated movements and manœuvres merely to show his own skill, a practice to which some of the French commanders were much addicted.

As the sun rose on the following morning—the not inglorious 21st of August—all eyes in our camp were fixed in the direction of Torres Vedras, which is only nine miles from Vimeira, with a hilly rugged country between. But no enemy appeared. At about 7 o'clock, however, a cloud of dust rose behind the hills nearest to the British positions; and, at 8 o'clock, some French cavalry, were seen crowding the heights to the southward, and sending forward scouts and skirmishers. This was rapidly followed by the apparition of a mass of French infantry, preceded by other cavalry; and then column after column followed in order of battle.

Again, the scene of bloody conflict was eminently pleasant and picturesque. Vimeira, a pretty village, stands in a lovely and peaceful valley, through which flows the gentle, little river of Maceira; the village is screened from the sea by some mountain heights; and, beyond the valley, the country swells into bold hills. The village was the principal place in our lines; and in it were lodged the park, the commissariat, and that noisy crowd of animals and followers which mark the presence of an army.

Junot, having joined Delaborde and Loison at Torres Vedras, was at the head, not of 20,000, but of about 14,000 men, of whom 1,600 were excellent cavalry. At 10 o'clock in the morning, he began the battle with a hot fire of artillery.

The principal attacks were made upon the British centre and left, the French being quite sure, this time, that they would drive the English into the sea, which was rolling close in their rear. The first attack was made with great bravery and impetuosity, but it was as gallantly repulsed by our people. But for Wellesley's lamentable deficiency in cavalry, the battle would have been finished then; for Colonel Taylor, galloping among the confused French, with the very few horsemen he commanded, scattered them with great execution. But Margaron's formidable squadrons of horse came down upon Taylor, killed him, and cut half of his feeble squadron to pieces. Taking advantage of this check, the French threw part of their reserve into a pine-wood which flanked the line of retreat, and sent the rest of their reserve to reinforce the divisions that were repeating the attack. But, again, the assailants were repulsed at all points; General Solignac made a capital mistake, General Brennier was wounded and made prisoner; the British separated the French brigades from each other, and, pressing

forward with the bayonet, they completely broke and scattered the enemy, who went off in confusion, leaving many prisoners and fourteen cannon behind them. The loss of the French, in killed and wounded, at the battle of Vimeira, was estimated at about 1,800; that of the British being exactly 720. Only about one-half of our force was actually engaged. Except the part of the reserve, which had been thrown into the pine-wood, the whole of Junot's force was brought into action. It was only noonday when the affair, which began at 10 A. M., was decided. The 4th and 8th British brigades had suffered very little; the Portuguese, the 5th, and the 1st British brigades had not fired a shot, and the latter was two miles nearer to Torres Vedras than was any part of the disheartened and confused French army. There was abundant time, and an admirable opportunity, for annihilating Junot; but Sir Harry Burrard had landed, and had brought with him his senility and irresolution. He had been present on the field during part of the engagement; but he had declined assuming the command, or interfering, in any way, with Sir Arthur's admirable arrangements, until the enemy was repulsed. Then, however, when Major-General Ronald Ferguson, on our left, was close upon the running French, when General Hill was ready to spring forward upon Torres Vedras by a shorter road than the French could take, and when General Wellesley would have followed up his victory by a general and rapid movement forward, Sir Harry Burrard demurred, thinking it unwise to hazard the fortune of the day—thinking it advisable, on account of the superiority of the French in cavalry, not to move any farther, but to suspend offensive operations, and wait at Vimeira for the arrival of Sir John Moore. Accordingly, Ferguson was ordered to desist from pursuit; Hill was called in, and the French officers, to their astonishment, were allowed to rally their men, and make good their retreat to the admirable position of Torres Vedras. In a letter, addressed to the Duke of York, Sir Arthur Wellesley said, with a most rare and admirable coolness,—"I think, if General Hill's brigade and the advanced-guard had moved forward, the enemy would have been cut off from Torres Vedras, and we should have been at Lisbon before him; if, indeed, any French army had remained in Portugal. But Sir Harry Burrard, who was at this time upon the ground, still thought it advisable not to move from Vimeira." But Sir Arthur's heart was warmer when, in the same letter, he came to

speak to the royal duke of the merits of the men and officers who had fought under him at Vimeira. These were his memorable words, – "I cannot say too much in favour of the troops; their gallantry and their discipline were equally conspicuous; and, I must add, that *this is the only action that I have ever been in, in which everything passed as it was directed, and no mistake was made by any of the officers charged with its conduct.*"

On the very day after the battle—on the 22nd of August—Sir Hew Dalrymple, arriving in a frigate from Gibraltar, landed, and superseded Sir Harry Burrard, as Sir Harry had superseded Sir Arthur Wellesley. Thus, owing to the unwise arrangements of our Government, the army, within twenty-four hours, had successively three commanders-in-chief! The time for prosecuting the victory was gone before Sir Hew Dalrymple could set foot on shore; and popular clamour and parliamentary criticism were guilty of great injustice towards Sir Hew, both with regard to the battle of Vimeira and the Convention which followed it.*

In the course of the 22nd (the day of Sir Hew's landing), the French general, Kellerman, appeared, with a flag of truce, on the part of Junot, to propose an armistice, preparatory to entering upon a convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French. The terms were discussed between General Kellerman and Sir Hew Dalrymple, who, in the end, directed General Wellesley to sign the armistice. Among the articles there was one which prejudged the terms of the final convention, by stipulating that the French army should not "in any case" be considered as prisoners of war, and that all the individuals composing it should be carried to France with arms and baggage, and "their private property, of every description, from which nothing should be detained!" This, of course, would include the church plate and other public and private property that the French had taken either at Lisbon or in the various towns which they had sacked, in consequence of the insurrection, and which they had divided among themselves. General Wellesley did not "entirely approve of the manner in which the instrument was worded"; but the articles, being laid before the Commander-in-chief, were signed by him that same evening. The armistice, however, was made subject to the approbation of the Admiral, Sir Charles Cotton; and, as one article of it stipulated, that the Russian fleet in the Tagus, under

* See Sir Hew Dalrymple, 'Memoir of his Proceedings,' &c., and the 'Parliamentary Papers' published in 1809.

Admiral Siniavin, should enjoy all the advantages of a neutral port, Sir Charles objected to this, but offered to enter into a separate arrangement with the Russian admiral. On the 25th, Sir Hew Dalrymple signified to Junot that the armistice would be at an end on the 28th, at noon, unless a convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French should be agreed upon before that day. In the mean time, the army had made a forward movement from Vimeira to Ramalhal, near Torres Vedras, within the boundaries stipulated by the armistice. Sir John Moore had also arrived in Maceira Bay, and his troops were about being landed. Junot, now perceiving the necessity of coming to terms, commissioned General Kellerman to confer with Colonel George Murray, quartermaster-general, about the final convention. The favourable moment for pushing upon the French was now quite past; and if they could not be brought to evacuate the country by sea, they might either defend themselves within Lisbon, or cross the Tagus to Elvas, which, being a place regularly fortified, would have required a long siege, during which the British army could not have been made available in Spain.* General Wellesley handed to Sir Hew Dalrymple a memorandum for Colonel Murray, suggesting, among other things, a separate agreement with the Russian admiral, and the propriety of devising some mode to make the French give up the church plate which they had seized. On the 29th, the draft of the proposed convention was brought to the British head-quarters at Torres Vedras, and, being laid before a meeting of general officers, several alterations were made, and the form, so altered, was returned to Junot, and was, at last, signed by him on the 30th, with the omission of several of the alterations, and was ratified by Sir Hew Dalrymple on the 31st. Sir A. Wellesley was not present at the final ratification, being then at Sobral with his division. This document has become known by the name of the "Convention of Cintra," though it was arranged at Lisbon, and finally ratified at Torres Vedras.† The article which gave most offence was

* 'Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 120.

† "Because Sir Hew Dalrymple's dispatches, enclosing a copy of the treaty, were dated from Cintra, between Torres Vedras and Lisbon, the convention unluckily got the name of 'The Convention of Cintra,' a name which was long made to figure, ludicrously and infamously, both in prose and verse; and which induced uninformed people to believe that it was actually negotiated and concluded in that village, and after the British had obtained possession of the formidable position of Torres Vedras, the key to the capital. This was making bad worse; the formidable position

that by which the French, under the name of baggage, were allowed to carry off much of the plunder of Portugal. Some limits, however, were put to this abuse by a commission being appointed, with General Beresford as the head, to superintend the strict execution of the terms of the convention. Through the exertions of the commissioners, the spoils of the Museum and the Royal Library were restored, together with the money taken from the public treasury. With regard to the Russian fleet, it was agreed that the ships should be held as a pledge by Great Britain during the war, and that the crews should be conveyed home in British ships.

The French embarked in the month of September, and the British troops took possession of the forts of Lisbon in the name of the Prince Regent of Portugal. The whole country being now free from the enemy, a council of regency was appointed, of which the active Bishop of Oporto was a member. The joy of the Portuguese, in general, was manifested in the most unequivocal manner. But in England the terms of the convention were the subject of severe and loud censure, and the Government appointed a board of inquiry to examine into the matter. Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard were recalled, in order to be examined by the board, as well as Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had already asked and obtained leave to return to England. The court sat in the month of November, and, after a long examination, reported, that the Convention of Cintra having been productive of great advantages to Portugal, to the army and navy, and to the general service, the court was of opinion that no further military proceeding was necessary on the subject, "because, however some of us may differ in our sentiments respecting the fitness of the convention in the relative situation of the two armies, it is our unanimous declaration that unquestionable zeal and firmness appear throughout to have been exhibited by Lieutenant-generals Sir Hew Dalrymple, Sir Harry Burrard, and Sir Arthur Wellesley, as well as that the ardour and gallantry of the rest of the officers and soldiers, on every occasion during this expedition, have done honour to the troops and reflected lustre on your Majesty's arms." The King adopted the opinion of the board, that no further

was obtained through the negotiation; and the convention was arranged at Lisbon by Colonel G. Murray and Kellerman, and was finally ratified at Torres Vedras, about thirteen miles from Cintra, and twenty-five from the capital."—'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

military proceedings were necessary, but, at the same time, expressed publicly, "his disapprobation of those articles of the convention in which stipulations were made affecting the interests or feelings of the Spanish and Portuguese nations.*

Sir Arthur Wellesley's examination before the board of inquiry ought to have added greatly to his reputation as a wise and great soldier: yet, for a time, it appeared as if he was destined to be deprived of the conduct of our Peninsular army. In the month of December he proceeded to Ireland, and resumed his old civil post as Chief Secretary. Parliament having reassembled in January 1809, he returned to London and took his seat in the Commons. On the 27th of January, he received, through the Speaker, the thanks of that House for his distinguished services in Portugal. The Speaker, Mr. Abbot (afterwards Lord Colchester), always performed these offices with grace, dignity, and warm eloquence; and even the prosiest and most carping members were electrified when, with his fine voice, he pronounced these words:—"It is your praise to have inspired your troops with unshaken confidence and unbounded ardour; to have commanded, not the obedience alone, but the hearts and affections of your companions in arms; and, having planned your operations with the skill and promptitude which have so eminently characterized all your former exertions, you have again led the armies of your country to battle, with the same deliberate valour and triumphant success which have long since rendered your name illustrious in the remotest parts of this empire.

"Military glory has ever been dear to this nation; and great military exploits, in the field or upon the ocean, have their sure reward in royal favour and the gratitude of Parliament. It is, therefore, with the highest satisfaction, that, in this fresh instance, I now proceed to deliver to you the thanks of this House."

A few days after this, the House of Lords passed resolutions to the same effect, which were communicated to Sir Arthur by Lord Chancellor Eldon.

Campaign of 1809.—The too confident Spaniards were throwing away army after army in blundering and in fighting pitched battles with the French veterans. Portugal, in which there had not been a Frenchman left, was again menaced. Our Government resolved to increase the forces in the Peninsula, and to aid both Spaniards and Portu-

* André Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.'

guese, and, in spite of numerous orators and writers who represented the attempt as the height of madness, they took measures for entering upon the war on a larger and a bolder scale. The Duke of York and Lord Castlereagh supported the claims of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and the general feeling of the nation was that he, and he alone, was the chief-commander we wanted. In a memorandum, dated 7th of March, Sir Arthur delivered his decided opinion that Portugal might be defended, whatever were the result of the contest in Spain; and that, in the mean time, the measures adopted for the defence of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their contest with the French. His notions were,—that the Portuguese military establishments ought, by means of English assistance, to be raised to 40,000 militia and 30,000 regulars; that the British troops ought to be raised to 20,000 infantry and 4,000 or 5,000 cavalry, with an increased rifle corps and considerably more artillery; that, even if Spain should be conquered, the French would not be able to overrun Portugal with a smaller force than 100,000 men; and that as long as the contest should continue in Spain, the united British and Portuguese army, if it could be put into a state of activity, would be most serviceable to the Spaniards, and *might eventually decide the contest.*

In this remarkable document, short as it was, nearly everything was foreseen and provided for. The proper expenditure of our subsidies, the means of reforming the bad management of the Portuguese finances, the means of reforming the Portuguese troops, and the means of victualing the allied armies in an impoverished and wasted country, were all considered with wonderful sagacity and wisdom. As indispensable parts of his plan, Sir Arthur laid it down that the Portuguese must be placed under the command of British officers; that the whole staff of the army, *the commissariat in particular*, must be British, and that these two departments must be greatly increased.* "But for the care taken by Sir Arthur Wellesley of the commissariat, which other commanders-in-chief had been accustomed wofully to neglect, or to leave to their inferiors—thinking barrels of salt pork and bags of biscuits unworthy the attention of well-bred gentlemen and gallant soldiers—but for the reforms he gradually introduced into our unsystematized commissariat department, there would have been no such

* For the rest of this invaluable memorandum of the defence of Portugal, see 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv.

glorious victories as Salamanca, Vitoria, and Toulouse; but the British army would have been wasted away by famine, and driven from the Peninsula with disgrace."* Very numerous were the tales told, during the progress of the war, of the Commander-in-chief's strict attention to these details, and of his sharpness to peccant officers in the commissariat department. On one occasion that hot Welshman, General Picton, enraged at a want of punctuality on the part of a deputy-commissary-general, threatened to hang that officer if the provisions were not brought up on the morrow. The commissary, putting on his best uniform, repaired to the Commander-in-chief, and laid his grievous complaint before him. "Did General Picton really threaten to hang you?" said Wellesley. "He did," replied the commissary. "Then," said the Commander-in-chief, "I would advise you to go and exert yourself and get up these stores, for General Picton is just the man to do what he threatens." The commissary went his way, and the provisions were up in time.

It was in the month of April 1809, that Sir Arthur Wellesley, having previously resigned both his seat in Parliament and his civil employment in Ireland, took his departure to assume the chief command in Portugal. The political and military atmosphere into which he was going was dark enough. In the preceding month of December, the French, under Napoleon Buonaparte in person, having retaken Madrid, after routing the Spaniards in the battles of Espinosa and Tudela, obliged the British forces under Sir John Moore, who had been sent from Portugal into Spain, to effect a disastrous retreat to Coruña, where the troops, after repelling Marshal Soult, and losing their own brave commander, had embarked for England in January. The French, following up their success, spread over Leon and Estremadura, to the borders of Portugal, and Soult, having overrun Gallicia, rushed into the northern Portuguese provinces, and carried Oporto by storm against the badly disciplined native troops. The small British force which had been left in Portugal, on Sir John Moore advancing into Spain, was concentrated by General Sir John Cradock, for the defence of Lisbon. It was under these circumstances, which would have been still more unfavourable if Austria had not declared war, and called Buonaparte from Spain into Germany, that Sir Arthur arrived at Lisbon, with some regiments of cavalry and other reinforcements. These,

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

together with the native regulars under General Beresford, whom the Prince Regent of Portugal had appointed to command his army, enabled Wellesley to bring into the field a force of about 25,000 men ; and with this force he moved, at the end of April, to dislodge Soult from Oporto, leaving a division, under General Mackenzie, on the Tagus, to guard the eastern frontiers against the French general, Victor, who was stationed near Merida in Spanish Estremadura.

Driving back all the French troops which had advanced south of the Douro, Sir Arthur, by the 11th of May, occupied the southern bank of that river opposite the town of Oporto. The French had destroyed the bridges, and removed the boats to their own side of the river, and Soult, in the belief that the English could not cross the river, was preparing to retire leisurely by the road leading to Gallicia. But General Wellesley despatched a brigade, under Murray, to pass the river about four miles above Oporto, while the brigade of guards was directed to cross over at the suburb of Villanova, and the main body, under the Commander-in-chief, was to attempt a passage between Murray and the brigade of guards, by means of any boats they might chance to find, just above the town. The Douro at that spot is very rapid, and nearly three hundred yards wide. About 10 o'clock on the morning of the 12th of May, two good-sized boats being discovered, General Paget, with three companies of the Buffs, crossed the river, and got possession of an unfinished but strong building, called the Seminario, on the Oporto side of the river. The French in the town were taken by surprise ; they never expected this hazardous attempt from the English, at whose general caution they were accustomed to sneer, forgetting that, where numbers were so small, caution was necessary.

Buonaparte and his marshals, with their forced conscription, their levies in the countries they had subjugated, and their habitual or systematic disregard of human sufferings and life, might hazard much, and throw away the lives of their thousands and tens of thousands of men ; but Sir Arthur Wellesley, even had his indifference to slaughter been as great as theirs, was bound by imperative circumstances to be sparing of his men. We had no conscription ; we could raise no forced levies on the Continent ; our native soldiers were voluntarily enlisted, and every man of them, in bounty-money, pay, and provisions, cost us three or four times more than any of his soldiers cost Buonaparte ; and if we retained foreign troops in our service it was at an equally

great expense. If Sir Arthur's army had been greatly weakened in 1809, there would have been small chance of his getting another army in 1810.

When made aware of our move across the Douro, the French sounded the alarm, and marched out to attack the Seminario; but before they could dislodge the first party of brave Buffs, General Hill crossed with more troops, and, protected by the British artillery from the southern bank, maintained the contest with great gallantry, until General Sherbrooke, with the guards, crossed lower down, and got into the very town of Oporto, charging the French through the streets, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants. Meantime the head of Murray's column, which had crossed the highest up, at Avintas, made its appearance on the north bank, and came down in true martial order to join the brave Buffs, and Hill, and Sherbrooke. Soult ordered an immediate retreat, which was effected in the utmost confusion. The French left behind them their sick and wounded, many prisoners, and much artillery and ammunition, retiring by Amarante, with the intention of passing through Tras-os-Montes into Spain. That evening, it is said, our great Captain dined in Soult's quarters on a dinner which was preparing for the Duke-Marshal when the fighting began. The French were so confident in their security, and then had gone off in such a hurry!

The passage of the wide and rapid Douro, performed in broad daylight, with most defective means of transport, and in presence of 10,000 French veterans, has been considered as one of Weilesley's finest achievements. He lost only twenty-three killed and ninety-eight wounded. Soult's loss was considerable, and though he carried many away with him, he left in Oporto 700 wounded and sick. These would have been butchered by the Portuguese but for Sir Arthur's considerate and active humanity. No sooner was he in possession of the city than he issued a most necessary proclamation, enjoining the vindictive inhabitants to respect the sick, wounded, and prisoners. The proclamation is more honourable to him than the victory. "I call upon you," said he, "to be merciful. By the laws of war, these Frenchmen are entitled to my protection, *which I am determined to afford them!*" He also wrote immediately to Marshal Soult to request him to send some French medical officers to take care of his sick and wounded, as he could not spare his own army surgeons, and did not wish to trust to the practitioners of the town of Oporto. He assured

Soult that his medical officers should be restored to him so soon as they had cured the wounded; and he proposed a cartel, or mutual exchange of prisoners. This is a reflection to smooth the pillow of our now aged, most venerable warrior. Whatever he could do to diminish the horrors of war, he did, and did it promptly. It is believed to have been in the nature of Soult to have responded on his part; but he could not subdue or control the ferocity of his troops, driven frantic by their reverses and sufferings, and the vengeful, merciless attacks of the Portuguese peasantry.

When Soult reached Amarante, he found that General Loison had been compelled to abandon the bridge there. This forced the Marshal to change his route, and he made for Salamonde. But on the evening of the 16th of May he was overtaken, on the road, near Salamonde, by Sir Arthur, who cut up his rear-guard, and took some prisoners. A good many of the French were killed and wounded, and many more of them were drowned in crossing the river Cabado in the dark. "We should have had the whole of Soult's rear-guard," said Sir Arthur, "if we had but had half an hour more daylight . . . . I shall follow him to-morrow . . . . He has lost everything—cannon, ammunition, baggage, military chest—and his retreat is, in every respect, even in weather, a *pendant* for our retreat to Corunna."

Soult, like Sir John Moore, had to retire through a mountainous country: he left the road strewed with dead horses and mules, and with the bodies of French soldiers, who were put to death by the peasantry before the advanced-guard of the British could come up and save them. By their own conduct the French had provoked this retaliation. "Their soldiers," said Sir Arthur, "have plundered and murdered the peasantry at their pleasure; and I have seen many persons hanging in the trees by the side of the road, executed for no other reason, that I could learn, excepting that they had not been friendly to the French invasion and usurpation of the government of their country; and the route of their column on their retreat could be traced by the smoke of the villages to which they set fire."*

With troops that carried with them, over the roughest roads, full equipments, and artillery and baggage, Sir Arthur could not hope to come up with Soult, with an army that had lightened itself by losing or throwing away everything, and that depended for its supplies on plunder. He

*Letter to Viscount Castlereagh, in 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv.

stopped his pursuit at Montealegre, a few leagues from the frontier of Spain, where a Spanish *corps d'armée*, under General Romano, ought to have confronted Soult's ruined forces, but did not.

Sir Arthur returned to Oporto. There he diligently applied himself to the improvement of the commissariat, to the means of fostering a kindly feeling between the British and the Portuguese, of removing the crying distresses of the country people, and of obtaining the most accurate information as to the nature of the country and the state of the roads by which he intended to follow the French into Spain. It was while he stayed at Oporto that he learned that Mr. Frere—an accomplished, amiable, and excellent man, but absent-minded, credulous, and unfit for diplomacy (he had sadly misled poor Sir John Moore)—was recalled from the embassy in Spain, and succeeded by one of his own able brothers. This opportune change led, in time, to very important results.

By the 26th of May the greater part of our troops had crossed the Mondego, and all Sir Arthur's arrangements were completed for an advance into Spain, where he intended to co-operate with, or at least to receive some aid from, the Spanish General Cuesta, who was reported to be on the Guadiana river with 40,000 or 50,000 men.

Except by reading, hearing the reports of some English officers who had served with the Spaniards, and studying the disastrous, but far from dishonourable, campaign of Sir John Moore, our great Commander, never having seen one in the field, could have had but little notion of the defective organization and discipline of a Spanish army. He got this knowledge in a lump when he came in contact with Cuesta. But, in the mean while, he had wisely resolved not to rely too much on those forces, and not to neglect anything to secure his own retreat, in case that movement should become a necessity. His advance was impeded by the difficulty of obtaining provisions and the means of transport; but, by the end of June, his van-guard touched the Spanish frontier.

The national cause of Spain had improved since Buonaparte had left the country (in January). None of his generals had individually the same influence, or genius, or means that he had at his disposal; and there was not a sufficient bond of union and goodwill among them all to make them act in concert towards one particular object at a time. Each had a plan of his own and a separate command over a large

division of the country, and was, in great measure, independent of the rest; and Joseph Buonaparte, the intrusive king, had no control over them, and, not being himself a military man, he could not direct their movements. "Each marshal, therefore,—and there were five or six of them in the Peninsula,—acted by himself, and the warfare became complicated and desultory. Marshal Victor commanded the first corps in Estremadura, near the borders of Portugal, the rolls of which mustered about 35,000 men; of whom, however, only 25,000 were under arms. General Sebastiani commanded the fourth corps in La Mancha, which mustered about 20,000 men under arms. A division of reserve under Dessolles, stationed at Madrid, together with King Joseph's guards, amounted to about 15,000 men; Kellerman's and Bonnet's divisions, stationed in Old Castile and on the borders of Leon and Asturias, to about 10,000 more. All the above troops, amounting to more than 60,000 disposable men, were considered to be immediately under King Joseph, for the protection of Madrid and of central Spain, and also to act offensively in Andalusia and against Portugal by the Tagus and the Guadiana. Soult had a distinct command. His business was mainly to occupy the northern provinces of Spain, and to act through them against Portugal: he had in his immediate power the second corps, mustering about 20,000 men under arms; the fifth, or Mortier's corps, reckoning 16,000; and Ney, with the sixth corps, also about 16,000. Soult's force in all was about 52,000 men in the field. These were the two French armies with which the English, advancing from Portugal, were likely to be brought into collision. Besides these, there were, in eastern Spain, the third and seventh corps, making together about 50,000 men, under Suchet and Augereau, who were pretty fully employed in Arragon and Catalonia; and 35,000 more were scattered in the various garrisons and lines of communication. The fortresses and fortified towns in the hands of the French were—1st, on the northern line, St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, Bilbao, Santona, Santander, Burgos, Leon, and Astorga; 2nd, on the central line, Jaca, Zaragoza, Guadalaxara, Toledo, Segovia, and Zamora; 3rd, Figueras, Rosas, and Barcelona on the eastern coast. But Soult, after being driven out of northern Portugal, had withdrawn from Gallicia; and Ney, following the same movement, completely evacuated that extensive province, including the forts of Coruña and Ferrol. A misunderstanding or disagreement

between those two commanders led to the deliverance of Gallicia, which was an important event in the war, for the French never regained that part of Spain. Marshal Soult reached Zamora in the beginning of July, and hovered about the eastern frontiers of Portugal. Ney, on his part, arrived at Astorga. Victor was posted between the Tagus and the Guadiana, his troops suffering much by the malaria fever; Mortier, with the fifth corps, on the road from Zaragoza to Valladolid, received orders from France to halt; and the Imperial Guards, which Napoleon had ordered into Spain, and which had arrived at Vitoria, were hurriedly ordered to march to the banks of the Danube. This was in consequence of the Austrian war, which had broken out. The French in Spain were reduced to a comparative state of inactivity, and Andalusia and Valencia were still untouched by them.*

The Spanish armies, though often scattered and always beaten by the French in the open field, had been somewhat re-organized. General Cuesta, commanding the army of Estremadura, was indeed on the Guadiana; but, instead of having 40,000 or 50,000 men, he had scarcely 35,000 under arms, and these imperfectly disciplined. This was the force with which General Wellesley had to co-operate in his advance into Spain for the purpose of attacking Victor, and attempting to reach Madrid.

The British army entered Spain in the beginning of July, and on the 8th of that month their head-quarters were at Placencia. Cuesta kept them waiting, but he joined them at Oropesa on the 20th. By another route, the active Sir Robert Wilson, with the Lusitanian legion, one Portuguese and two Spanish battalions, moved on to Escalona, only eight leagues from Madrid, threatening the rear of Victor's army, which was posted at Talavera la Reyna. On the 22nd, the combined Spanish and British armies attacked Marshal Victor's outposts at Talavera, and drove them in. The enemy would have suffered more, if that crusty, impracticable old Spaniard, General Cuesta, had not thought fit to absent himself from the field. On the morrow—the 23rd of July—the British columns were formed for the attack of the French position, as Wellesley wished to cripple Victor before he could be joined by Sebastiani. But old Cuesta was again crusty, and "contrived to lose the whole of the day, owing to the whimsical perverseness of

* André Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.' 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv.

his disposition."* The loss of the day could not be recovered. At one hour after midnight, Marshal Victor left Talavera to retreat to S. Olalla, and thence to Torrijos, to form a junction with Sebastiani. Early on the 24th, Sir Arthur established his head-quarters in Talavera. Before entering Spain, he had bargained with Cuesta and the governing Junta for adequate supplies of provisions and means of transport; but the Spaniards had scandalously broken their agreement. In the course of the 24th, Sir Arthur wrote to Lord Castlereagh:—"I am not able to follow the enemy as I could wish * * * owing to my having found it *impossible to procure even one mule or a cart in Spain.* * * * My troops have been *in actual want of provisions for the last two days.*"† He therefore resolved, in justice to his brave little army, to enter into no new operation, but rather to halt, and even to return to Portugal, if he should not be supplied as he ought to be. His letters during the whole of this campaign teem with painful details on the subjects of provisions, forage, mules and carts, and Spanish indolence and insincerity.

The people, the local authorities, the generals, and the Junta, all seemed unanimous in their unwillingness to provide for the English, although sure to be amply paid for their supplies. Whether it was Spanish inertness, which not even the love of gain can excite, or Spanish prejudice against foreigners in general, and especially against heretics,—for such their British allies were called,—or fear of parting with supplies which they might want themselves, or in some instances a bias towards the French, for there was a French party in the Spanish towns, it is a fact that, while Cuesta's army abounded with provisions and forage, Sir Arthur could not get enough to supply his men with half-rations. "The French," he observes, "can take what they like, and will take it, but we cannot even buy common necessaries."‡ "No troops," he wrote to his brother, the Marquis, "can serve to any good purpose unless they are regularly fed; and it is an error to suppose that a Spaniard,

* These are the Duke's own expressions. See 'Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 526.

In the same letter he says,—"I find General Cuesta more and more impracticable every day. It is impossible to do business with him, and very uncertain that any operation will succeed in which he has any concern. * * * He has quarrelled with some of his principal officers; and I understand that all are dissatisfied with him."

† 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv.

‡ Id. A. Vieusseux's 'Military Life.'

or a man, or an animal of any country, can make an exertion without food. In fact, the Spanish troops are more clamorous for their food, and more exhausted if they do not receive it regularly, than our own troops are."*

When Sir Arthur halted the British troops at Talavera, Cuesta was all of a sudden invaded by what seemed irrepressible energy and activity; and, with singular arrogance, he singlely dashed forward in pursuit of the French. His columns passed the Alberche in rapid succession, as if they were to stop at nothing short of the iron barrier of the Pyrenees. Sir Arthur, who could scarcely help foreseeing how all this sudden ardour would end, recommended caution and circumspection to the old gentleman, and sent a part of the British force some ten miles in advance of Talavera. The two armies previously acting in concert were now separated, the Spaniards being in pursuit of Victor, and the mass of the British forces remaining perfectly quiet, "enjoying semi-starvation upon the banks of the Tagus."†

Cuesta went blundering through S. Olalla, and rushed on, like a wild bull broke loose from the amphitheatre, to Torrijos. But here he found the rear-guard of the French marshal, who had been joined by General Sebastiani; and the sting of the French tail—Victor's rear at Torrijos—was quite enough for this disorderly, ill-commanded Spanish army.‡ On the morning of the 27th, a half-naked rabble arrived at Talavera, and fell in the rear of the British, and Cuesta and his better battalions arrived soon after, to tell that they had been beaten, and that the French were close at their heels.§ Nobody could doubt the first fact, but the second assertion was not quite correct, for Victor and Sebastiani deemed it prudent to wait for the arrival of Joseph Buonaparte and Marshal Jourdan, who were coming up with the guards and garrison of Madrid, and thus leaving that capital exposed to Sir Robert Wilson, and his rapid loose Lusitanians, and to any Spanish general that might get near, and be quick and bold.

It was clear, however, to Sir Arthur Wellesley, that he would not be allowed a long repose; and therefore he busily employed himself in examining and strengthening his position

* 'Dispatches,' vol. iv. This letter is dated 9th August 1809.

† Lieutenant-colonel Leith Hay's Narrative of the Peninsular War; a concise, clear, and very animated narrative, where nearly everything that is related was seen by the author.

‡ 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of Geo. III.

§ Colonel Leith Hay's Narrative.

at Talavera, taking especial care to get good cover for the Spaniards, whose stomach for fighting had much declined since their affair at Torrijos. The fate of the British army seemed to hang upon a thread. The French were quite sure it did, and that the thread would snap. Soult, the most skilful of them all, was rapidly advancing from Salamanca by the Puerto de Baños, upon Placencia, in Sir Arthur's rear. Cuesta had been charged by Sir Arthur to guard the narrow difficult mountain-pass of Puerto de Baños; but the "impracticable" had sent thither only 600 men, and these were swept away from the rocks by Soult's veterans like flies from a wall. Marshal Mortier from Valladolid was following Soult, and Marshal Ney, unknown to Sir Arthur, was hurrying from Astorga, with the hope of falling upon his left flank.* Thus there were more than 50,000 fighting men of the enemy behind the mountains of Placencia ready to act on the left flank and rear of the British, who had also 50,000 more in front of them. The British force in the field did not exceed 20,000. There were a few more battalions on their march from Lisbon to join the army, but they did not arrive till after the battle of Talavera. The Spanish army of Cuesta now mustered about 31,000 men, such as they were. The Portuguese regular troops, under Beresford, had remained to guard the north-east frontier of Portugal, towards Almeida. It had been previously agreed between General Wellesley, Cuesta, and the Spanish Supreme Junta, or Central Government, that General Venegas, who was at the head of the Spanish army of Andalusia, consisting of about 25,000 men, should march through La Mancha upon Madrid, whilst Wellesley and Cuesta were advancing by the valley of the Tagus. Venegas did advance through La Mancha, but it seems that he received counter orders from the Supreme Junta, which had the effect of slackening his march; he, however, made his appearance at last towards Aranjuez and Toledo, and it was his approach on that side which induced King Joseph to engage Wellesley and Cuesta, in order to save his capital. If he had kept the Allies in check for a few days longer, Soult's arrival at Placencia would have obliged the English to retire precipitately. But King Joseph fearing that Venegas from the south, and Sir Robert Wilson, who, with the Lusitanian legion, was hovering in the neighbourhood on the north, would enter Madrid and seize the stores,

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. Colonel Leith Hay's Narrative. General Fao's Histoire de la Guerre de la Peninsule.

the reserves, the hospitals, &c., he and Marshal Victor determined to give battle to the Allies in front, for if they were defeated, Madrid could be easily protected. General Wellesley, perceiving, from the movements of the enemy, that a battle was at hand, placed the Spanish army on the right near the Tagus, before the town of Talavera, its front protected by natural and artificial barriers. In this position they could hardly be seriously attacked. The British infantry, on whom the General could depend, occupied the left of the line, which was open in front, but its extreme left rested upon a steep hill, which was the key of the whole position. The whole line extended in length about two miles. On the 27th of July the French moved from S. Olalla, crossed the river Alberche, drove in the British outposts, and attacked two advanced brigades of the English, which fell back steadily across the plain into their assigned position in the line.*

Victor next attacked the British left, while Sebastiani made a demonstration against the Spaniards on our right, several thousands of whom, after discharging their loaded muskets, fled panic-stricken to the rear, followed by their artillery, and creating a terrible confusion among the baggage, retainers, mules, &c.; and it was with difficulty that the rest of the Spanish troops were prevented from following this pernicious example. Thanks to Sir Arthur Wellesley, the Spaniards, when once rallied, found that their position could not be seriously attacked; it afforded in abundance those covers under which they, in modern times at least, had always been found to fight best; the ground was covered with olive trees, and much intersected by thick mud walls and ditches; there was a strong old church with a heavy battery in front of it, and along the whole of their part of the line were redoubts, walls, banks, and abatties, or parapets, made of felled trees. The French, finding the Spaniards so well placed, made no further attack on that side, but directed their efforts against the British left, which, under Lord Hill, occupied the eminence. For a moment the enemy succeeded, turning our left and ascending the hill. The sun had set, and the short twilight of the south was gone.

"Darkling they fight and only know
If chance has sped the fatal blow,
Or, by the trodden corse below,
Or by the dying groan:

* A. Vieusseux—*resumé* of 'Dispatches.'

Furious they strike without a mark,
Save now and then the sulphurous spark
Illumes some visage grim and dark,
That with the flash is gone."*

Attacking them with the bayonet, Hill regained possession of that key to our position, and drove the French down the steeps. At the dead of night Victor repeated the attack on this point, on which everything depended; but Hill was now reinforced, and Sir Arthur himself rode to the spot, ordering up more artillery. Another terrible conflict, in the dark, took place; but the assailants were again hurled back into the valley, and again left the level ground on the hill top thickly strewed with dead bodies and wounded men. There, side by side, lay 1,000 French and 800 British. Of the survivors, the French returned to their bivouacs, and the English stretched themselves on the hill-top.

"And wearied all, and none elate,
With equal hope and doubt they wait
A fiercer, bloodier day."†

At daylight on the morning of the 28th, Victor hurled two more strong divisions of infantry against the fatal height; but the Englishmen there had been told by Sir Arthur that they *must* maintain that position. Hill lost many brave officers and soldiers, and was himself wounded; but he soon had the satisfaction of seeing the two French columns reel from before his British bayonets, and roll down the steep, after losing entire brigades.

Another long pause ensued; but about the hour of noon the French renewed their attack, spreading it along the whole part of the line occupied by the British. Heavy columns of French infantry twice attacked our right, under General Campbell, which joined the Spanish forces, but each time they were repulsed; and a Spanish cavalry regiment charging on their flank at the same time, obliged them to retire in great disorder. In these attacks the French columns lost ten guns and a great number of men. Meanwhile, a strong French division, supported by two regiments of cavalry, advanced to turn the British left, and here a cavalry fight occurred, in which our 23rd light dragoons lost one-half of their number. But some corps of Spanish infantry and English and Spanish cavalry, properly posted by

* 'The Battles of Talavera.' This patriotic, spirited, and correctly descriptive poem, published anonymously in 1809, is now the avowed production of the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker.

† 'The Battles of Talavera.'

General Wellesley, checked all further advance on this side. Victor, failing on our left, made a desperate attack on our centre. His men went close up to our line with stubborn resolve, but they had to reel back in disorder under a great discharge of musketry. But the English guards there placed were too hot and rash in pursuing the retreating foe. The supporting columns and dragoons of the French advanced; the French, who had been repulsed, rallied and faced again, and some French batteries hammered the flank of the guards, who in their turn drew back in disorder. At the same time our German legion, on the left of our guards, being hard pressed by the French, got into confusion. In fact, our centre was broken. This was the critical moment of the battle—the "agony of fame" to Sir Arthur Wellesley. But our great Captain was on the stern hill-top on the left of the position, and had a clear view of the whole field. He knew what was to be done, and knew how to do it. Instantly, he ordered the 48th regiment, which was on the hill, to descend and advance in support of the centre, and at the same time he gave the word "forward" to General Cotton's light cavalry. The advance of the 48th foot was a sight to see; they moved in beautiful order amidst the retiring crowds, and, wheeling back by companies, let them pass through their intervals; and then resuming line, they marched against the pursuing columns of the French, plied them with destructive charges of musketry, and then, closing upon them with a pace firm and regular as if they were on parade, checked all forward movement. Our guards and our German legion quickly rallied, and Cotton and his brigade of light cavalry coming up at a trot, the French began to waver, and at last they fairly gave way and made a run for it. Sir Arthur Wellesley's own force, now reduced to less than 14,000 men, and exhausted by fatigue, were unable to give pursuit, and the Spaniards, who (with the exception of a little cavalry) had scarcely been engaged at all, were utterly incapable of making any evolutions; and thus, about six in the evening, on the second day of combat, all fighting and firing ceased, each army retaining the position which it had occupied in the morning. The guards and the French reserve of that timid and very pseudo king, Joseph Buonaparte, had not been engaged during the day, and had Napoleon been there he would—at that period of his life—have tried a last effort against our lines with these two uninjured, untouched corps. But Joseph, Jourdan, and Victor had by this time quite enough of Talavera;

their troops were evidently disheartened, having been repulsed at all points, and having lost two generals in killed, besides 7,000 men in killed and wounded, and seventeen of their guns. On the side of the British, two generals, Mackenzie and Langworth, were slain, with 800 men; and three generals and above 4,000 men were wounded. The battle, or rather the battles, of Talavera (for there were two of them) were like the "battles of giants." I would only call attention to the size and dimensions of the contending giants. Counting, as I do, the Spaniards for next to nothing, the English Briareus had, at the beginning, 20,000 arms, while the French giant had 50,000.*

The next morning, at daybreak, the whole French army, who had begun crossing that river in the dead of night, were on the other side of the Alberche, and taking up a position on the heights of Salinas. Except at Albuhera, the French never again fought so well throughout the rest of the Spanish war; and yet France confessed, in a hurried night retreat, that she had been beaten and humiliated.

"Far from the field where late she fought—
The tents where late she lay—
With rapid step and humbled thought,
All night she holds her way;
Leaving to Britain's conquering sons
Standards rent and ponderous guns,
The trophies of the fray;
The weak, the wounded, and the slain,
The triumph of the battle-plain,
The glory of the day." †

In the course of the same day—the 29th of July—General Robert Craufurd reached Sir Arthur's camp from Lisbon, with the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th (rifles). The reinforcement altogether amounted to nearly 3,000 men. This was the light brigade, which was ever after in advance during the Peninsular campaigns, and which acquired military celebrity for its gallantry and quickness of movement.‡

Having retreated before 14,000 British, the French were not at all disposed to return and renew the combat with 17,000. "*La sanglante journée de Talavera avait repandue*

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. pp. 530-9.—A. Vieusseux.—Col. Leith Hay.—Napier.—M. Sherer, &c. &c.

† 'The Battles of Talavera.'

‡ André Vieusseux's 'Military Life.' This gentleman served for some time with the light brigade.

*l'effroi dans l'armée Francaise!"** They felt that British troops could stand and fight against double their numbers. "There is nothing," wrote Buonaparte to his generals, "that is dangerous in Spain except the English; all the rest is *canaille* that can never keep the field."† Sir Arthur Wellesley passed the 29th and 30th in establishing his hospitals in the town of Talavera, and endeavouring to get provisions, as his men were nearly starving. In this he was not at all assisted by the Spanish authorities or the Spanish inhabitants. "We are miserably supplied with provisions," thus he wrote to Lord Castlereagh, on the 1st of August, from Talavera; "the Spanish armies are now so numerous that they eat up the whole country. They have no magazines, nor have we; nor can we collect any, and there is a scramble for everything. I think the battle of the 28th is likely to be of great use to the Spaniards; but I do not think them in a state of discipline to contend with the French. * * * The French in the late battle threw their whole force upon us, and although they did not succeed, and will not succeed in future, we shall lose great numbers of men, which we can but ill afford. I dare not attempt to relieve ourselves from the weight of the attack by bringing forward the Spanish troops, owing to their miserable state of discipline, and their want of officers properly qualified. These troops are entirely incapable of performing any manœuvre, however simple. They would get into irretrievable confusion; and the result would probably be, the loss of everything."‡

The intrusive King Joseph, with the 4th corps and the reserve, moved on the 1st of August farther back, to Illescas, between Madrid and Toledo, in order to oppose the army of Andalusia, under General Venegas; and Victor, with the first corps, retreated likewise along the Madrid road, through alarm at the movements of Sir Robert Wilson on his flank. But Soult was now advancing from the north with no less than three corps, and with one of these corps he entered Placencia on the 1st of August, while Ney was steadily moving on from Salamanca in the same direction. Soult found Placencia deserted by most of its inhabitants, and he could gather no intelligence of the position of the British and Spanish armies under Wellesley and Cuesta; he only

* The bloody day of Talavera had spread terror in the French army. These are the words of Sarrazin, a French general and writer on war.

† J. Belmas, 'Journaux de Sieges,' &c. Paris, 1836.

‡ 'Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 554.

heard vague rumours of a terrible battle having been fought a few days before. This ignorance of each other's movements was a common occurrence in the Spanish war, and is to be accounted for by the nature of the country, the difficulties of communication, the thinness of the population, and the incurious indolent habits of the people. There were cases where a great battle was fought in one valley, and not known behind the mountains which divided it from another valley; and when more was learned of what was passing, it was seldom that any great pains were taken by the Spaniards to convey information to their friends.* On the 2nd of August, however, Sir Arthur learned that the enemy had entered Placencia; but that was all he could learn. Supposing that Soult was alone with his corps, which he estimated at only 15,000 men, and that his intention was to join Victor, he determined to encounter him before he could effect the junction; he therefore marched on the 3rd of August to Oropesa with the British army, leaving Cuesta at Talavera, particularly recommending him to protect the hospitals; and, in case he should be obliged by any advance of Victor to leave Talavera, to collect carts to move away the wounded. The position of the hostile armies was now very singular; they were all crowded along the narrow valley of the Tagus, from the neighbourhood of Madrid to the frontiers of Portugal. King Joseph and Sebastiani were at Illescas and Valdemoro, between Madrid and the Tagus, while the advanced posts of Venegas were on the left or opposite side of the river, near Toledo. Victor was lower down on the right bank, at Maqueda, near the Alberche, watching Cuesta, who was at Talavera; General Wellesley was farther down, at Oropesa; whilst Soult was on the Tietar, on the road from Placencia to Almaraz; and Beresford, with the Portuguese, was said to be moving farther west along the frontiers of Portugal.† "The allies under Wellesley and Cuesta held the centre, being only one day's march asunder; but their force, when concentrated, was not more than 47,000 men. The French could not unite under three days, but their combined forces exceeded 90,000 men, of whom 53,000 were under Soult; and this singular situation was rendered more remarkable by the ignorance in which all parties were as to the strength and movements of their adversaries. Victor and the king, frightened by Wilson's partisan corps of 4,000 men, were preparing to unite at

* 'Pictorial Hist.'—Reign of George III. vol. iv.

† André Vieusseux.

Mostoles, near Madrid, while Cuesta, equally alarmed at Victor, was retiring from Talavera. Sir Arthur Wellesley was supposed by King Joseph to be at the head of 25,000 British; and Sir Arthur, calculating on Soult's weakness, was marching with 23,000 English and Spanish to engage 53,000 French; while Soult, unable to ascertain the exact situation of either friends or enemies, little suspected that the prey was rushing into his jaws. At this moment the fate of the Peninsula hung by a thread, which could not bear the weight for twenty-four hours; yet fortune so ordained that no irreparable disaster ensued."*

In the evening of the 3rd of August, Sir Arthur learned that Soult's advanced posts were at Naval Moral, and consequently between him and the bridge of Almaraz, on the Tagus, thus cutting his line of communication with Portugal. About an hour after receiving this intelligence, Sir Arthur got letters from Cuesta, informing him that the enemy was moving upon his (Cuesta's) flank, and had returned to S. Olalla in his front,—that Joseph was coming back to join Victor,—that Soult must be far stronger than General Wellesley had supposed,—and that, therefore, and from the consideration that Wellesley was not strong enough to check Soult's corps coming from Placencia, he (Cuesta) intended to leave Talavera that evening (and to abandon in it the English hospitals, excepting such men as could be moved by the means he had already collected), in order to join the British army at Oropesa, and assist it in repelling Soult. These reasons did not appear to Sir Arthur quite sufficient for giving up so important a post as Talavera, for exposing the combined arms to an attack in front and rear at one and the same time, and for abandoning his sick and wounded. He wrote one of his short and earnest letters to the wilful old man, imploring him to stay where he was, or to wait at least until the next morning, in order to cover the removal of our hospitals. But before this letter could reach him, Cuesta, who was evidently afraid of staying at Talavera without Wellesley, had begun his march; and, on the next morning, the rising sun shone upon his dirty, ragged troops, marching into Oropesa. This was the 4th of August. About 2,000 of the British wounded had been brought away, but about 1,500 had been left at Talavera to be made prisoners.†

Cuesta's retreat must almost immediately bring Marshal

* Napier's 'History of the Peninsular War,' book ix.

† 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 561.

Victor and Joseph Buonaparte upon Sir Arthur, who by this time had ascertained, through intercepted letters, that Soult's force was indeed much stronger than he had reckoned. The English General was now placed between the mountains and the Tagus, with a French army advancing upon each flank, and with his retreat by the bridge of Almaraz completely cut off. After the experience he had had of Cuesta and his Spaniards, he could not rely upon them in an open field of battle; and he could not, with 17,000 British, fatigued and famishing, hope to fight successively two French armies, each nearly three times stronger than his own. Before this moment of real jeopardy, he had expressed and repeated his opinions that, with their present commanders and officers, and in their present state of discipline, the Spaniards were next to useless in the open country, and that everything would be lost by the British if any reliance were placed upon them.*

These, be it observed, in justice to the memory of a brave, good man, were precisely the same convictions that were entertained by Sir John Moore when he began his retreat upon Coruña; and yet our diplomatist, Mr. Frere, insisted at the time, and Mr. Southey and other friends of Mr. Frere, and romantical admirers of the people of the country, continued to repeat, many years afterwards, that, with the assistance of Spanish generals and Spanish troops, Sir John Moore and his little army ought to have driven the French beyond the Pyrenees. I take the opinion of our great Captain as a perfect refutation of such nonsense.

But, hemmed in as they were, there was still one—and only one—line of retreat left open to the British; for, a little below Talavera the Tagus was crossed by the bridge of Arzobispo; and by this route, and by this bridge, Sir Arthur determined to retire immediately, before the enemy should have time to intercept him. He communicated his designs to Cuesta, who, according to custom, opposed them. The perverse, silly old man wanted, forsooth, to stop and fight the French at Oropesa! Wearied out with his absurdities, Sir Arthur sternly told him that he might do as he liked, but that, for his own part, being responsible for the British army, he should march forthwith. And accordingly, on that same morning, before Cuesta's disorderly rear reached Oropesa, the British filed off towards Arzobispo. It was a blessing that the Spaniards, who generally destroyed what they ought to have left standing, and left

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. iv. p. 561.

standing what they ought to have destroyed, had not blown up the only bridge open to us. The 2,000 wounded, the artillery, the stores, were all carried safely over the Tagus. Before evening, Sir Arthur took up an excellent position behind the right bank of that river, and then the British army was safe. "I hope," wrote our General to Viscount Castlereagh, "that my public dispatches will justify me from all blame, *excepting that of having trusted the Spanish general in anything.*"

That insensate commander was not mad enough to stay when Sir Arthur was gone. He, too, crossed the bridge of Arzobispo, but in so slovenly a manner that the French, who closely followed him, took a good part of his artillery, and would have taken it all if General Wellesley had not sent British troops to the rescue. Here ended the fighting campaign of the British for 1809. Sir Arthur moved his head-quarters to Jaraicejo, on the high-road to Badajoz, leaving a strong rear-guard to prevent the enemy from passing the Tagus. The bridge of Almaraz had already been broken by the Spaniards, but Sir Arthur left British troops to guard the strong pass of Mirabete, which faced the broken bridge of Almaraz; and he caused all the Spanish artillery that was left to be dragged up the mountain of Meza d'Ibor, another very strong position. The line of defence of the allies was thus skilfully re-established. "All is now safe," wrote Sir Arthur, "and I should feel no anxiety on any subject if we had provisions; *but we are almost starving.*"

Meantime Joseph Buonaparte recalled a corps which had crossed the Tagus at Talavera, and ordered it to join Sebastiani against Venegas, who was now at Almonacid, near Toledo. Marshal Ney, on the other side, whom Soult had directed to ford the Tagus below the broken bridge of Almaraz, could not discover the ford. Soult now proposed the bold plan of marching with his three corps by Coria and Abrantes, and reaching Lisbon by the right bank of the Tagus before the English; but Ney, Jourdan, and Joseph opposed the scheme, and soon after a despatch came from Napoleon forbidding any further offensive operations till the great reinforcements, which his successful termination of the Austrian war now placed at his disposal, should have time to march from the Danube to the Tagus, or to be actually in Spain.

Napoleon, since he had assumed the imperial crown, trusted almost entirely to superiority of numbers, and to

those overwhelming masses which he recruited so cheaply by means of the conscription. The proportion of cavalry and artillery in his armies in Spain was beyond all precedent. "How different from the adventurous general of the Army of Italy, who with 35,000 men encountered and defeated three Austrian armies, each stronger than his own, in 1796. But he was now bloated with success, and war must be with him a sure game. He had already 200,000 men in Spain, and yet he did not think them enough. His generals had adopted the same views:—'It is large masses only, the strongest that you can form, that will succeed.' Thus wrote Soult to King Joseph before the battle of Talavera. It is worthy of remark that Sir Arthur Wellesley, writing about this time, said—'I conceive that the French are dangerous only when in large masses.' Such was the character of the wars of the French empire. And yet, with all his tremendous masses, and a proportionate waste of human life, Napoleon failed in the end."*

Soult's army now went into cantonments in Estremadura and Leon, near the borders of Portugal. Sebastiani having defeated Venegas at Almonacid, in the month of August, drove him back upon the Sierra Morena—Joseph Buonaparte, cursed by the people, was again residing as a *roi fainéant* at Madrid. French moveable columns, not unlike the infernal columns which had formerly devastated the Vendée, now traversed various parts of Spain; a bloody guerilla warfare was waged by the Spaniards in many distant provinces and districts; some towns on the eastern coast, in Catalonia and Valencia, were taken by the French, while others held out, costing the besiegers an enormous sacrifice of life. When covered by a few old walls, and when trusting to their own instinct, without relying on pedantic officers, the Spanish burghers and peasants fought like heroes.

The violent opposition party at home, which never ceased predicting his defeat, ruin, and disgrace until he stood a conqueror on the crest of the Pyrenees, and poured his invading columns into France, had been very busy in criticising this campaign, and were at their invidious work while Sir Arthur was engaged at Talavera.

"Oh, heart of honour, soul of fire,
Even at that moment fierce and dire,
Thy agony of fame!

* André Vieusseux's 'Military Life of the Duke.' I doubt whether Buonaparte's great secret has ever been so well told in so few words.

When Britain's fortune dubious hung,
And France tremendous swept along,
In tides of blood and flame;
Even while thy genius and thy arm
Retrieved the day and turned the storm,
Even at that moment factious spite,
And envious fraud essayed to blight
The honours of thy name."*

But the good old King, the Duke of York, the Duke of Clarence, Lord Castlereagh, with every member of the cabinet, and with large majorities in both houses of Parliament, took a very different view of the campaign, as did, most assuredly, the mass of the British nation. On the 4th of September 1809, shortly after receipt of the news of his remarkable battle, Sir Arthur was raised to the peerage with the titles of Baron Douro of Wellesley and Viscount Wellington of Talavera. In announcing this elevation to our hero, the Duke of Portland said—"Long may you enjoy that honour, and be placed, for the advantage and honour of your country, in those situations which may enable you to add to your own." The hearty *Amen*, the "so be it," then pronounced by every true English heart, has been more than responded unto. The "so be it" has *been* and *is*.

On the 20th of August, before receiving his well-merited honours, Sir Arthur removed his head-quarters to Badajoz, and placed his army in cantonments on the line of the Guadiana. His chief motive was the neglect of the Spanish authorities in supplying his army with provisions, which obliged him to draw near his magazines in Portugal: and another reason was, the impossibility of co-operation with the undisciplined Spanish armies. An unpleasant correspondence took place on the subject between the Spanish Supreme Junta and the English ambassador at Seville. In the autumn the British troops suffered greatly from the malaria-fever, which prevails at that season near the banks of the Guadiana.

"The handful of troops whom Sir Arthur now commanded," says one of his gallant companions in arms, "was composed of second battalions, of mere youths, both officers and men. . . . . Indeed, the Guards, the Buffs, the 48th and 61st, with the light division, which had lately joined, under Craufurd, were the only portions of the army which at other periods would have been regarded as fit for active service. Of the cavalry, again, it is impossible to speak in higher terms. They were dropping off daily; and both

* Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, 'Battles of Talavera.'

men and horses suffered from sickness, to a degree even more appalling than that which befel the infantry."* The Spaniards would furnish nothing to our sick troops, and their generals in the field arrogantly and insolently rejected all advice, and refused all co-operation. "I wish," said his lordship, "that the eyes of the people of England were open to the real state of affairs as mine are. . . . . The Spaniards have neither numbers, efficiency, discipline, bravery, nor arrangement, to carry on the contest."† To Lord Castlereagh he wrote—"Their practice of running away, and throwing off arms, accoutrements, and clothing, is fatal to everything, excepting a reassembly of the men in a state of nature; who as regularly perform the same manœuvre the next time an occasion offers. Nearly 2,000 ran off on the evening of the 27th from the battle of Talavera (not a hundred yards from the place where I was standing), who were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack, and who were frightened only by the noise of their own fire; they left their arms and accoutrements on the ground; their officers went with them, and they and their fugitive cavalry *plundered the baggage of the British army which had been sent to the rear.* Many others went off, whom I did not see. Nothing can be worse than the officers of the Spanish army; and it is extraordinary that when a nation has devoted itself to war, as this nation has, by the measures it has adopted in the last two years, so little progress has been made in any one branch of the military profession by any individual, and that the business of an army should be so little understood. They are really children in the art of war."‡ Without Spaniards on his hand, Lord Wellington was quite sure that he could maintain Portugal against the French.

In October his lordship repaired to Lisbon, and proceeded to reconnoitre the whole country in front of that capital, for it was then that he resolved upon the construction of the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras, which enabled him to baffle all the efforts of the French in the following year. I can only refer the reader to the "Memorandum" which he wrote at Lisbon on the 20th of October for Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, of the Engineers, in which he clearly points out the double line of position, the entrenchments and redoubts, the number of men re-

* Marquis of Londonderry's Narrative.
† Letter to Mr. Huskisson, Secretary to the Treasury.
‡ 'Dispatches,' vol. v. pp. 82-90.

quired at each post, &c., as if the whole were already in existence before his eyes. This paper, so remarkable, considering the epoch and circumstances in which it was written, is a most striking evidence of Wellington's comprehensive mind, his penetration, and foresight.* Of his plan, however, nothing was said or even whispered at the time.

He returned to his head-quarters at Badajoz, from whence he made an excursion to Seville, where he conferred with his brother, the Ambassador, whom he accompanied to Cadiz. On the 11th of November he returned to his head-quarters at Badajoz. At the same time another fatal blunder was committed by the Spaniards.

About the middle of November the Supreme Junta ordered the army of Andalusia, joined by the greater part of the army of Estremadura, to advance suddenly upon Madrid, and this without any previous communication with Lord Wellington, who was at Badajoz, or with the Duke del Parque and other Spanish commanders in the north of Spain. Venegas, the general of the army of Andalusia, had been superseded by Areizaga, an inexperienced young officer, who was in favour with the Junta. Old Cuesta had also retired, and made room for Eguia in the command of the army of Estremadura. These two armies, which constituted the principal regular force of the Spaniards, and which, posted within the line of the Tagus and along the range of the Sierra Morena, protected, and might long have protected the south of Spain, were thrown away upon a foolish errand. Areizaga, with nearly 50,000 men and sixty pieces of artillery, advanced into the plains of La Mancha, and was attacked on the 16th November, in the open fields of Ocaña, by the two French corps of Mortier and Sebastiani; and, although his men fought with sufficient courage, yet he was completely routed, with the loss of more than one-half of his army, and all his baggage and artillery, with the exception of fifteen guns. Not deterred by this awful catastrophe, the Duke del Parque, with 20,000 Spaniards in the north, advanced from Salamanca against Kellerman, but he was beaten and driven to the mountains of Peña de Francia. The French north of the Tagus were thus left at liberty to attack Ciudad Rodrigo and the frontiers of Portugal. "I lament," thus Lord Wellington writes from Badajoz on the news of these mishaps,—"I lament that a cause which promised so well a few weeks ago should have been so completely lost by the ignorance, presumption, and mismanage-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. v. p. 234-9.

ment of those to whose direction it was entrusted. I declare that, if they had preserved their two armies, or even one of them, the cause was safe. The French could have sent no reinforcements which could have been of any use; time would have been gained; the state of affairs would have improved daily; all the chances were in our favour; and in the first moment of weakness, occasioned by any diversion on the Continent, or by the growing discontent of the French themselves with the war, the French armies must have been driven out of Spain. But no! nothing will answer except to fight great battles in plains, in which the defeat of the Spanish armies is as certain as is the commencement of the battle. They will not credit the accounts I have repeatedly given them of the superior number even of the French; they will seek them out, and they find them invariably in all parts in numbers superior to themselves. I am only afraid, now, that I shall be too late to save Ciudad Rodrigo, the loss of which will secure for the French Old Castile, and will cut off all communication with the northern provinces and leave them to their fate. I wonder whether the Spanish officers ever read the history of the American war, or of their own war in the Dutch provinces, or of their own war in Portugal."

A storm now gathering in the north-east was sure to burst upon Portugal. Accordingly, Lord Wellington retired from Spanish ground altogether, and moving through Alemtejo with the mass of his army, in December he crossed the Tagus at Abrantes; and marching thence to the Mondego, he fixed his head-quarters at Viseu in January 1810, having his outposts along the Portuguese frontiers towards Ciudad Rodrigo, and having left General Hill's division, south of the Tagus, to protect the Alemtejo. In the mean time, both he and Beresford laboured might and main to raise the Portuguese regular army to a state of efficiency in numbers, armament, and discipline. Too much praise could hardly be bestowed on Beresford for the part he took in these endeavours. Most happily the Portuguese, whom the Spaniards always affected to despise, were far more modest and tractable than their neighbours.

Campaign of 1810.—Lord Wellington, in maintaining that the defence of Portugal was a practicability, never meant that he should be able to defend the whole frontier of that country, the frontier being too extensive and open on too many points. His assurance was, that he could secure Lisbon the capital, and the other strongholds, and the

mountains and fastnesses, so as to keep his footing in the country, and tire and famish out the invaders. As long as the British kept Portugal, the French tenure of Spain must be insecure. Buonaparte knew this well, and was, therefore, so anxious to dispel the English from Portugal. Months before the storm burst, Lord Wellington had written to the Earl of Liverpool—"I do not think that the French will succeed in getting possession of Portugal, with an army of 70,000 or even of 80,000 men." This was now to be proved.

The French armies in Spain had received during the winter great reinforcements from Germany, in consequence of the peace which their emperor had been enabled to dictate to Austria under the walls of Vienna. Junot and Drouet, with two fresh corps, had crossed the Pyrenees, followed by a part of the Imperial Guards. It was reported that Napoleon himself was coming. Ney, Kellerman, and Loison, in Old Castile and Leon, pressed on the Portuguese frontier with 60,000 men, and seemed, in the month of April, to be quite ready for an attack. To open the way for it, they had besieged and taken Astorga from the Spaniards, and were making preparations for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. Soult was now in the south of Spain, with Victor and Mortier under his orders, and was displaying his activity and administrative abilities in organising his military resources, and establishing French authority in Andalusia. General Regnier was in Estremadura, ready to co-operate in the invasion of Portugal by either bank of the Tagus. But Regnier's movements were watched by General Hill, with about 12,000 British and Portuguese, whom Lord Wellington had stationed on the frontiers of Alemtejo. At the south extremity of Spain, Cadiz, strong by its natural situation, was garrisoned by a British force of 7,000 men, under General Graham, in addition to some Spanish troops; and the French, under Marshal Victor, were blockading that place. In the north, the Spaniards remained in possession of Gallicia and Asturias, but were not in condition to effect any powerful diversion. In the east of Spain, Valencia and Murcia still held out, but Catalonia was the only province in which the Spaniards kept up a regular, active system of warfare against the French. O'Donnell, the best of the Spanish generals, commanded the Catalonians, and was favoured by the nature of the country, by the numerous fortresses which were in it, and by part of an English fleet which kept along that coast. The Catalonians had also an

organised and a daring militia, known by the names of Somatenes and Miguelets,—a force far more efficient than any regular army which the Spaniards had, as yet, on foot. But the struggle in Catalonia was too remote to have much influence on the operations in Portugal.

About the middle of May, Marshal Massena arrived at Valladolid, having been sent by Buonaparte to take the command of the army assembled on the frontier of Portugal. Massena's force, disposable for the invasion, exceeded 72,000 men. To this number was afterwards added, in the course of the campaign, about 18,000 men, under General Drouet. Lord Wellington's force, in regular troops, counting both Portuguese and English troops, did not exceed 54,000. There was, indeed, a considerable Portuguese militia, but this was employed mostly in garrisons, and in the provinces beyond the Douro. Massena had this advantage; he could concentrate his whole force for the attack on the north of the Tagus, while Lord Wellington was obliged to leave part of his army to the south of that river, to guard against the French army of Andalusia, which was more than 60,000 strong, and a part of which might advance into the Portuguese province of Alemtejo. Moreover, let this be marked,—Massena's immense host was composed chiefly of old soldiers, while Lord Wellington could rely confidently only upon the British part of his army, which did not exceed 25,000 men, the Portuguese regular troops being as yet untried, and the militia being a militia, and no more.

That the campaign would open with the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo was the general expectation. Early in June, Massena's French invested that place, almost in sight of the British advanced division; but Lord Wellington could not risk his army for the relief of that Spanish fortress, his object being to defend Portugal, and above all, Lisbon. On the 10th of July, Ciudad Rodrigo capitulated. Our great Captain retained his position on the left bank of the Coa. The French advanced to that river, and near a bridge were encountered by General Craufurd, who inflicted upon them a loss of about 1,000 men. Craufurd's engaging was against Wellington's order; but it gave Massena a striking specimen of the stern resistance that he had to encounter on his march to Lisbon.

The French marshal issued a proclamation, abusing the "insatiable ambition" of England; sneering at Lord Wellington, recommending the Portuguese population to remain

quiet, and assuring them of protection for their persons and property. How this last promise was kept, was stated by our Commander-in-chief, in a counter-proclamation, dated a few weeks after the entrance of Massena:—"The time which has elapsed during which the enemy have remained upon the frontiers of Portu gal has fortunately afforded the Portuguese nation experience of what they are to expect from the French. The people had remained in some villages trusting to the enemy's promises, and vainly believing that, by treating the enemies of their country in a friendly manner, they should conciliate their forbearance, and that their properties would be respected, their women would be saved from violation, and their lives would be spared. Vain hopes! The people in these devoted villages have suffered every evil which a cruel enemy could inflict. Their property has been plundered, their houses and furniture burnt, their women have been ravished, and the unfortunate inhabitants whose age or sex did not tempt the brutal violence of the soldiers, have fallen the victims of the imprudent confidence they reposed in promises which were only made to be violated. The Portuguese now see that they have no remedy for the evils with which they are threatened, but determined resistance. Resistance, and the determination to render the enemy's advance into their country as difficult as possible, by removing out of his way everything that is valuable, or that can contribute to his existence or frustrate his progress, are the only and certain remedies for the evils with which they are threatened. The army under my command will protect as large a proportion of the country as will be in their power; but it is obvious that the people can save themselves only by resistance to the enemy, and their properties only by removing them. The duty, however, which I owe to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, and to the Portuguese nation, will oblige me to use the power and authority in my hands to force the weak and the indolent to make an exertion to save themselves from the danger which awaits them, and to save their country; and I hereby declare that all the magistrates or persons in authority who remain in the towns or villages after receiving orders from any of the military officers to retire from them, and all persons of whatever description who hold any communication with the enemy, and aid and assist them in any manner, will be considered traitors to the state, and shall be tried and punished accordingly."*

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. vi. pp. 229, 230.

Marshal Massena, a very low-bred soldier of fortune, found he could not move quite so rapidly as he had anticipated. In one of those inflated papers which disgraced the French during all the Buonaparte period, he had given himself only three months to achieve the conquest of Portugal, and drive Lord Wellington into the sea; but he passed nearly one entire month inactively on the line of the Coa, ere he commenced the siege of Almeida. It was the 15th of August when he began to break ground before that place. Then Lord Wellington moved part of his army to the front, to take advantage of any opportunity for relieving the place. Almeida was defended by a Portuguese garrison, commanded by an English officer. Lord Wellington expected that it would hold out well; but on the night of the 27th of August, under French fire, a magazine blew up, which contained nearly all the powder, and by the explosion a good part of the town and its defences were destroyed; and this obliged the governor to capitulate. Disappointed and vexed—for he reckoned on the place detaining the French until the rainy season set in—Wellington then fell back with the main body of his army to the valley of the Mondego. Soon, however, he had the consolation of knowing practically, and to a certainty, that Massena was not entitled to the reputation which revolutionism and Buonapartism had conferred upon him. The marshal lost many more days; and it was on the 15th of September, when the rain was pouring down, as from hogsheads, that he really began his march along the valley of the Mondego, by the right bank of that river, taking the direction of Coimbra, through our old quarters at Viseu. It was no laughing time; but our great Captain could not help indulging in a smile at Massena's monstrous mistake. "There are, certainly," said he, "many bad roads in Portugal, but the enemy has taken decidedly the worst in the whole kingdom."*

Lord Wellington, who had retired by the left bank of the Mondego, now crossed the river, and took up a strong position in front of Coimbra, along the memorable ridge of Busaco. He was joined in good time (on the morning of the 26th) by General Hill, from the south, who had left some of his troops on the left bank of the Mondego, to bar the road to Lisbon on that side. The position at Busaco was grim to look at; but on the evening of the 26th of August, the French were at its foot, and began skirmishing.

* 'Wellington Dispatches.'

"Nothing," says a British officer present, "could be conceived more enlivening, more interesting, or more varied than the scene from the heights of Busaco. Commanding a very extensive prospect to the eastward, the movements of the French army were thence distinctly perceptible. . . . . Rising grounds were covered with troops, cannon, or equipages: the widely-extended country contained a host moving forward, or gradually condensing into masses, checked in their progress by the grand natural barrier."*

In the course of the night, 70,000 men, formidable for their discipline and the long habit of conquest, were at the foot of that ridge, under conduct of three marshals of France, the chief of whom, Massena, was renowned by a life of great military successes. On the top of the ridge, or, rather, a little upon the backward slope of the Serra—in order that their disposition and numbers might be masked from the enemy—lay 25,000 British soldiers, and a like number of Portuguese.

As early as two in the morning of the 27th, the sentinels on our picket-posts could hear the stir of preparation in the French camp; and the British line stood silently to arms. In the order of battle, Hill occupied the right, with Leith upon his left, and the Lusitanian legion in reserve. Next in order stood the 3rd division, under fiery Picton. Our 1st division was formed near an old convent, at the very top of the Serra, with the brigade of Pack posted considerably in advance on the descent. The light division was formed on the left of Pack, and, in like manner, upon the descent from that lofty culm where the convent stood. A swell of earth and rock concealed their line from the enemy; while, at some distance behind their posts, a brigade of German infantry stood exposed to full view, as if it were the only body to oppose the French. Our 4th division, under General Cole, held the extreme left of the ridge, covering a road which led into a flat country, on which the British cavalry were drawn up in reserve. The British and Portuguese artillery was distributed along the front, at those points where it could be employed with the best effect.†

The grey mist of early dawn hung yet upon the mountain; and it was but a doubtful light when the enemy quitted their camp. But as they advance, column upon column, the sun shone forth on their multitudinous array.

* Colonel Leith Hay. † Captain Moyle Sherer.

"And is it now a goodly sight,
Or dreadful to behold,
The pomp of that approaching fight,
Waving ensigns, pennons light,
And gleaming blades and bayonets bright,
And eagles winged with gold." *

I have been told by a brave English officer—then a young ensign, and going, for the first time, into battle—that the sight took away his breath, and that our soldiers, on the ridge of Busaco, gazed for a time at it, motionless and silent. But this was soon over—the French moved up the hills. "Two columns, under Regnier, pressed up to the assault of the third division; and three, under Ney, moved rapidly against the convent. These points of attack were about three miles asunder. The firing first opened in front of Craufurd's division; but, despite its earnest loudness, at the first faint report of guns from the right, Wellington, anticipating the object of Massena, rode thither, and found, as he had expected, that the main effort of the enemy was to possess themselves of the road which traverses the Busaco, from St. Antonio de Cantara, and to turn his right. They were ignorant of the presence of Generals Hill and Leith, and considered themselves engaged with the extreme right of the British. But, from the summit of that rocky brow, which they had ascended, through a storm of opposing fire with astonishing resolution, and for which they were still contending, though vainly, with the brave division of Picton, they beheld the strong and steady columns of those generals moving swiftly to the scene of action. The right of the third division had been, in the first instance, borne back: the 8th Portuguese had suffered most severely; the enemy had formed, in good order, upon the ground which they had so boldly won, and were preparing to bear down to the right, and sweep our field of battle. Lord Wellington arrived on the spot at this moment, and aided the gallant efforts of Picton's regiments, the fire of whose musketry was terrible, by causing two guns to play upon the French flank with grape. Unshaken even with this destruction, they still held their ground, till, with levelled bayonets and the shout of the charge, the 45th and 88th regiments British, most gallantly supported by the 8th Portuguese, rushed forwards, and hurried them down the mountain side with a fearful slaughter." †

But there was another column of the enemy, which had

* 'The battles of Talavera.' † Captain Moyle Sherer.

gained a height beyond the line of Picton's division. Upon this column, Colonel Edward Barnes's brigade of General Leith's corps, headed by the 9th regt., under Colonel Cameron, made a rush; and the French, though defending themselves with a fierce fire of musketry, were borne over the rocks by the bayonets of the brave 9th. Another hopeless assault was made on General Craufurd, in front of the convent. The French advanced with great ardour, in spite of the musketry of our light troops and the bullets of our artillery, which made great havoc in their columns as they ascended the steep; but they had as yet no footing on the swelling ridge which masked the 43rd and 52nd regiments, when, at the given word, those gallant regiments ran upon them at the charge step, overthrew them with the bayonet, and then poured such a murderous fire upon the *fuyards*, that their line of retreat was strewed a long way down the hill with their dead and disabled.

After this lesson, the French marshals would not think of renewing the combat on the grim Serra de Busaco. They had lost one general and about 1,000 in killed, two generals and about 3,000 in wounded; while one general and several hundred men had been made prisoners—in all nearly 5,000. The loss of the allies did not exceed 1,300, whereof 578 were Portuguese — being their full proportion, and a convincing proof that they had stood to their work like soldiers.

The conduct of the Portuguese was, indeed, worthy of their ancient, but long obscured, fame. By the victory of Busaco they were inspired with a confidence in Wellington, and with a confidence in themselves, which never afterwards forsook them. Their gallant bearing was, to Marshal Beresford especially, and to all the British officers serving under him (who had helped to turn "a lawless rabble" into a fine army), a very high honour, and a well-earned reward.*

"This movement," says Wellington, "has brought the Portuguese levies into action with the enemy, for the first time, in an advantageous situation; and they have proved that the trouble which has been taken with them has not been thrown away, and that they are worthy of contending, in the same ranks with British troops, in this interesting cause, which they afford the best hopes of saving." †

One great object of Lord Wellington, in fighting the battle of Busaco, was to give time to the population of the

* Captain Moyle Sherer, 'Military Memoirs of the Duke.'

† 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. vi. p. 475.

country in his rear to get out of the way of the enemy with their goods and provisions, especially from Coimbra, a populous and rather wealthy town; but the orders he had given to that effect were ill obeyed, and, in many instances, totally neglected until the French marauders were in the towns and villages. North of the ridge of Busaco, there was the pass of Boyalva; and thither Massena now directed the heads of his formidable columns. Lord Wellington had directed Colonel Trant to occupy the Boyalva pass with a Portuguese division; but Trant missed the direct road, and arrived too late; and the French descended through the pass into the maritime plains, seizing on the road leading from Oporto to Coimbra. Massena had thus turned Lord Wellington's position, and got in his rear. But, facing about, the allies, on the 29th, quitted the ridge of Busaco, crossed the Mondego, and began their retreat towards Lisbon—with full confidence that Massena was not to plant his eagles there this time.

On the 1st of September, the British rear-guard, after some skirmishing with the French, evacuated Coimbra, accompanied by nearly all the remaining inhabitants, who now ran away with whatever moveable property they could carry, not knowing whither they were going, or by whom they were to be lodged and fed. The sick, the aged, and the children were put upon carts, mules, and asses; but respectable men and delicate women were seen walking slowly and painfully on foot, under heavy burdens, and encumbering the road, while the French cavalry was hovering on our flank and rear. "It was a piteous sight," says an officer present, "and one which those who saw it can never forget." The French entered the forsaken city of Coimbra, where they found ample stores of provision, which the soldiers pillaged and wasted, instead of husbanding them for the future necessities of their army. Massena halted three days in the town, and then pursued his march, leaving 5,000 sick and wounded behind him. Three days after his departure, Colonel Trant rushed into Coimbra, with a body of Portuguese militia, and captured these 5,000 French, together with some effective soldiers who had been left to protect the hospitals. Other bodies of militia and of organised peasants acted also upon the enemy's rear in co-operation with Trant; and every town or post which the French evacuated as they advanced towards Lisbon, was taken immediate possession of.

As the English and Portuguese pursued their leisurely

march in echellons of divisions, by the two roads of Espinhal and Leiria, they found the villages deserted, the mill in the valley motionless, the mountain cottages open and untenanted, the bells of the monastery silent, and the white churches empty. The flank of our columns were now literally covered with the flying population. It was like the uprooting and sweeping away of the population of whole provinces, with their flocks and their herds, their household goods and gods, and everything that was theirs: it was a scene such as Europe might have presented at the first irruption of the Huns.

It is to be remarked, however, that great as might have been the sufferings of this forced emigration, the people must have suffered infinitely more if they had remained in their homes during the French advance, and the infernal retreat which followed it. And better had it been for the general cause in the Peninsula, if Lord Wellington's proclamation had been in all instances more strictly obeyed.

Meanwhile, Massena followed our columns, and talked as loudly as before of driving the English into the sea. When intelligence of these movements reached England, the political party which had always represented the glorious struggle as a hopeless one, said that Wellington had gained another victory only to commence another retreat; and that it was one of the wildest flights of human presumption to think of defending a country like Portugal against the vast, victorious armies and surpassing genius of Buonaparte. They, too, anticipated that our 25,000 British must flee to their ships if they could only escape the ignominy of a capitulation; but no such raven croaked over the tent of our great Commander. The plan of defence which he had formed and matured was still unbroken and entire, and so were his own hopes. Writing to our admiral in the Tagus, during the retreat, he said,—"I have very little doubt of being able to hold this country against the force which has now attacked it. There will be a breeze near Lisbon, but I know that we shall have the best of it." And writing to his brother Henry,* now ambassador in Spain, he said,—"We shall make our retreat to the positions in front of Lisbon without much difficulty or any loss. *My opinion is, that the French are in a scrape.* They are not a sufficient army for the purpose, particularly since their late losses, and since the Portuguese have behaved so well; and they

* Henry Wellesley, afterwards Lord Cowley.

will find their retreat from this country a most difficult and dangerous operation."*

His own retreat from Busaco, a distance of nearly 200 miles, was performed without loss or irregularity, although the van of Massena's immense column was several times near enough to skirmish with our rear-guard. On the 7th of October, the French came in sight of the chain of hills behind which, at the distance of twenty-four miles, lay the city of Lisbon. And now up Lines of Torres Vedras, and show the lion in the middle path!†

But those lines were already up; and everything was prepared to keep the French at bay.

This grand defensive scheme had more or less occupied the mind of Wellington ever since the campaign of 1808. It had been indispensable to conceal the great project, and to mystify the French; and this had been done with astonishing address. Even when most actively engaged in directing the construction of the works, our great Commander had the art to make not only the enemy, but also the people of the country, believe that he intended nothing serious there; and it is said, that, in order to keep up the illusion, he sometimes spoke of the plan, even to officers of his own army, as a thing which had flitted through his head, but which had been abandoned; and even when he received better information, Massena remained in the belief that the works thrown up were little more than field-works, which might easily be turned or overpowered by his own batteries, and that so extensive a line was not defensible by such a force as Wellington commanded, but must have several weak points, at one or two of which a concentrated sustained attack, costing, perhaps, a few thousands in killed and wounded, must eventually succeed. But along the whole line there was not one weak point; nor was there an opening or interstice through which a mountain goat could pass but was blocked up or guarded. Down the hollows in which the roads ran, were pointed the black muzzles of numerous guns, projecting from batteries which could maintain a fire in front, and a crossing fire from the flanks. While Massena had been waiting at Coimbra and Sobral, stupendous exertions had been made to give the last finish to these grand defences. To complete the barriers, palisades, platforms, and planked bridges leading into

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi.

† 'But in the middle path a lion lay.'
Sir Walter Scott, 'Vision of Don Roderic.'

the works, 50,000 trees were placed at the disposal of the engineer department. There was no lack of hands to do the necessary work; 3,000 artillery men and officers of the country were on the spot; 7,000 Portuguese peasantry were employed as labourers; and the British engineers, artillery-men, and artificers, were aided by our soldiers of the line who had been left to garrison Lisbon, and who found a pleasant excitement and much amusement in the occupation. From Torres Vedras to Lisbon, the whole country was covered or constantly traversed, like an ant-hill in an autumnal evening. By night and by day, people, cars, mules, horses, and donkeys, were bringing up materials and implements; and every day, every hour, the position was gaining strength from all this unremitting labour. The roads leading up to the position were destroyed; and as Wellington had gained time, and brought down the French just as the rainy season was setting in, they found an inundated country and a swamp to give them damp welcome. A finer field for manœuvring than that which our troops had behind the ridges of Torres Vedras could scarcely be desired or conceived. One of Wellington's bravest and most illustrious comrades, says,—"I cannot proceed further without desiring to draw the attention of my brother soldiers in a particular manner, not only to the subject (Torres Vedras) of which I am now speaking, but to the whole plan of this campaign, because I am sure that a British army never took part in one better adapted to instruct it in the art of manœuvring on a grand scale, nor, consequently, so well calculated to make efficient officers of those who shared in it, or are disposed to take the trouble of studying it as it deserves."*

I was at Torres Vedras in the spring of 1815, when the works might be traced, and the whole plan easily understood. For a complete notion of the lines, the reader must consult military and scientific books, and Wellington's own despatches. The following is an outline sketch by an officer who served behind those lines with the 60th Rifles:—

"The line of defence was double. The first, which was twenty-nine miles long, began at Alhandra, on the Tagus, crossed the valley of Armia, which was rather a weak point, and passed along the skirts of Mount Agraça, where there was a large and strong redoubt; it then passed across the valley of Tibreira, and skirted the ravine of Runa to the heights of Torres Vedras, which were well fortified; and

* Marquess of Londonderry, 'Memoir of the War in the Peninsula.'

from thence followed the course of the little river Zizandre to its mouth on the sea-coast. The line followed the sinuosities of the mountain tract which extends from the Tagus to the sea, about thirty miles north of Lisbon. Lord Wellington's head-quarters were fixed at Pero Negro, a little in the rear of the centre of the line, where a telegraph was fixed corresponding with every part of the position. The second line, at a distance varying from six to ten miles in the rear of the first, extended from Quintella, on the Tagus, by Bucellas, Monte Chique, and Mafra, to the mouth of the little river S. Lorenço, on the sea-coast, and was twenty-four miles long. This was the stronger line of the two, both by nature and art, and, if the first line were forced by the enemy, the retreat of the army upon the second was secure at all times. Both lines were secured by breastworks, abattis, stone walls with banquettes, and scarps. In the rear of the second line there was a line of embarkation, should that measure become necessary, enclosing an entrenched camp and the fort of St. Julian. More than two redoubts or forts, and 600 pieces of artillery, were scattered along these lines. Lord Wellington had received reinforcements from England and Cadiz; the Portuguese army had also been strengthened, and the Spanish division of La Romaña, 5,000 strong, came from Estremadura to join the allies; so that the British commander had about 60,000 regular troops posted along the first and second lines, besides the Portuguese militia and artillery (which manned the forts and redoubts and garrisoned Lisbon,) a fine body of English marines which occupied the line of embarkation, a powerful fleet in the Tagus, and a flotilla of gun-boats flanking the right of the British line.* It was altogether a stupendous line of defence, conceived by the military genius of the British commander, and executed by the military skill of the British engineer officers."†

The highest praise was due and was given by Lord Wellington to these engineer officers, whose labours were directed at first by Colonel Fletcher, and afterwards by Captain J. T. Jones, both of the Royal Engineers.

Another officer says,—"Indeed, it was rather a mighty and impregnable fortress than a camp. Here the faces of mountains were scarped—there rivers dammed to make defensive inundations; while, upon the lines of defence, a triple chain of redoubts was most skilfully disposed. . . . .

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi. p. 582.

† A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke.'

The communications within the works were excellent, and all the roads and positions free for the movement of our troops."*

On the 8th of October, the allied army began entering these lines, each division taking up its assigned quarters as quietly and orderly as if it were marching into a garrison-town of its own; and by the 10th, our entire force was collected on those heights, leaving the French, in the wet plain below, to gaze at our positions,

"As famished wolves survey a guarded fold."†

Massena's astonishment was equalled only by his mortification! For three days he did nothing but stare at the lines, and examine them through a telescope. He then employed several days in reconnoitering them, and in making demonstrations in order to induce the British general to show out his forces—a thing which Wellington never did, or would do, until the moment when it was absolutely necessary and unavoidable.

"On the 14th of October the French made an attack on a detachment of the 71st regiment, which was in advance of the lines near the town of Sobral, but they were repulsed with the bayonet and driven back into Sobral. Another skirmish occurred near Villa Franca, in front of the right of the line, in which the French General St. Croix was killed by the fire of the English gun-boats. After this, no further demonstrations were made. Massena put the second and eighth corps partly in the villages and partly in bivouacs in front of the right and centre of the British position, leaving the sixth corps at Otta in his rear. He established his depôt and hospitals, and commenced forming magazines at Santarem, and for this purpose sent moveable columns to scour the country for provisions, for he had entered Portugal without magazines, every soldier carrying fifteen days' bread, which many, however, threw away or wasted on the road. The country had been partly stripped by the inhabitants, who had retired to the mountains or within the lines, and the devastation of the French foraging parties destroyed what was left, so that for many leagues in rear of the French the country became a perfect desert. To add to this, the Portuguese militia, under Trant, Miller, and Wilson, came down from the north and cut off all communication between Massena's army and the Spanish frontier."‡

* Captain M. Sherer, 'Military Memoirs of the Duke.'
† Sir Walter Scott, 'Vision of Don Roderic.'
‡ A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life.' 'Wellington Dispatches.'

Toward the end of October, Massena sent 2,000 men across the Zezere in order to re-open a communication with Spain by way of Castellobranco; and General Foy proceeded with a strong escort by way of Penomacor to Ciudad Rodrigo, from whence he hastened to Paris to inform Napoleon of the real state of affairs in Portugal. If Foy told the truth, he had a sad tale to tell. The French, who had entered Portugal 70,000 strong, had lost 15,000 men; they had become very sickly in consequence of privations, bivouacking in low grounds, and being exposed, with little or no shelter, to heavy rains and inclement weather.

Massena had now given up all idea of attempting to force the lines unless he received immense reinforcements. On the 15th of November, he began a retrograde movement, with great caution, for the purpose of placing his army in cantonments for the winter. There were terrible discontentments among his officers as well as among his men.

On the 17th, the French second corps was established at and near Santarem, in a very strong position; the eighth corps at Pernes, and the sixth corps at Thomar, farther in the rear. Massena's head-quarters were fixed at Torres Novas. The British light divisions and cavalry followed the French movements, and took some prisoners, but nothing of importance occurred. Lord Wellington, leaving part of his troops in the lines, moved forward the remainder towards the Rio Mayor, which separated him from the French position at Santarem. Hill's division was placed on the left bank of the Tagus, opposite Santarem. Wellington's head-quarters were fixed at Cartaxo. Thus ended the campaign of 1810.*

As the French had advanced by the valley of the Mondego and the country west of the Estrella ridge, the people of that tract of country had in great measure deserted it, and carried off the provisions; but the population east of the mountains had remained in fancied security, so that when Massena withdrew his army to that quarter, he found the towns of Thomar, Pernes, Torres Novas, and Golegão inhabited and untouched. Cattle and corn were procured, and the French were supplied at least for part of the winter. By a scandalous remissness, a number of boats had been left behind at Santarem, on the right bank of the Tagus, by means of which the enemy had the power of crossing the river whenever he liked. This annoyed Lord Wellington more than anything else, and he expressed him-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi.

self strongly concerning the Portuguese regency for not having enforced the necessary orders for removing everything out of the reach of the enemy, as he had urged them to do months before. "The French could not have stayed, if the provisions had been removed. . . . . All our military arrangements are useless, if they can find subsistence on the ground which they occupy. . . . . Then the boats are left at Santarem in order to give the enemy an opportunity of acting upon our flanks. . . . . It is heartbreaking to contemplate the chances of failure from such obstinacy and folly."*

A perverse spirit had manifested itself in the Portuguese regency ever since the fall of Almeida, absurd men having taken up the notion that Lord Wellington ought to have risked his entire army in an attempt to save that fortress. By degrees, a violent faction was formed by Principal Souza and the Patriarch (formerly Bishop of Oporto), who wanted to control and direct the operations of our great Commander. As his lordship would not submit to their dictation, they thwarted him in every way. While yet in the field, and on his retreat before Massena, Wellington had written to Mr. Charles Stuart, our ambassador at Lisbon, to denounce the practices of this faction, and the meddling, insolent spirit of a set of priests: — "In order to put an end at once to these miserable intrigues, I beg that you will inform the Portuguese Government that I will not stay in the country, and that I shall advise the King's Government to withdraw the assistance which his Majesty affords them, if they interfere in any manner with the appointments of Marshal Beresford's staff, for which he is responsible; or with the operations of the army; or with any of the points which, under the original arrangement with Marshal Beresford, were referred exclusively to his management. I propose also to report to his Majesty's Government, and refer to their consideration, what steps ought to be taken if the Portuguese Government refuse or delay to adopt the civil and political arrangements recommended by me, and corresponding with the military operations which I am carrying on. (This refers to the measure of destroying, or rather rendering useless, the mills, by removing the sails, &c.) But it appears that the Portuguese Government have lately discovered that we are all wrong; they have become impatient for the defeat of the enemy, and, in imitation of the Central Junta of Spain, call out for a battle and early suc-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi. pp. 515, 521, 570.

cess. If I had had the power I would have prevented the Spanish armies from attending to this call."*

In another letter, dated Rio Mayor, October 6, addressed likewise to Mr. Stuart, Lord Wellington says—"You will do me the favour to inform the regency, and above all the Principal Souza, that, his Majesty and the Prince Regent having intrusted me with the command of their armies, and likewise with the conduct of the military operations, I will not suffer them, or anybody else, to interfere with them; that I know best where to station my troops, and when to make a stand against the enemy; and I shall not alter a system formed upon mature consideration upon any suggestion of theirs. I am responsible for what I do, and they are not; and I recommend them to look to the measures for which they are responsible, and which I long ago recommended to them, viz., to provide for the tranquillity of Lisbon, and for the food of their own army and of the people, while the troops will be engaged with the enemy. As for Principal Souza, I beg you to tell him from me, that I have had no satisfaction in transacting the business of his country, since he has been a member of the government; that, being embarked in a course of military operations, of which I hope to see the successful termination, I shall continue to carry them on to the end, but that no power on earth shall induce me to remain in the Peninsula for one moment after I shall have obtained his Majesty's leave to resign my charge, if Principal Souza is to remain either a member of the government or to continue at Lisbon. Either he must quit the country, or I will; and if I should be obliged to go, I will take care that the world, or Portugal, at least, and the Prince Regent, shall be made acquainted with my reasons. From the letter of the 3rd, which I have received from Don Miguel Forjaz, I had hoped that the Government was satisfied with what I had done, and intended to do, and that, instead of endeavouring to render all further defence fruitless, by disturbing the minds of the populace of Lisbon, they would have done their duty by adopting measures to secure the tranquillity of the town; but I suppose that, like other weak individuals, they add duplicity to their weakness, and that their expressions of approbation, and even gratitude, were intended to convey censure. . . . I have but little doubt of success; but as I have fought *a sufficient number of battles to know that the result of any one is not certain, even with the*

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi. p. 412.

best arrangements, I am anxious that the Government should adopt preparatory arrangements, and take out of the enemy's way those persons and their families who would suffer if they were to fall into their hands."*

On the 1st of November, being then at Pero Negro, his lordship wrote a still more remarkable letter to our ambassador. Beginning with a cutting sarcasm on the priests, he said, "I may have mistaken the system of defence to be adopted in this country; and Principal Souza and other members of the Regency may be better judges of the capacity of the troops, and of the operations to be carried on, than I am. In this case, they should desire his Majesty and the Prince Regent to remove me from the command of the army. But they cannot doubt my zeal for the cause in which we are engaged; and they know that there is not a moment of my time, nor a faculty of my mind, that is not devoted to promote it; and the records of the Government will show what I have done for them and their country. If, therefore, they do not manifest their dissatisfaction and want of confidence in the measures which I adopt, by desiring that I should be removed, they are bound, as honest men and faithful servants to their prince, to co-operate with me by all the means in their power, and thus should neither thwart them by opposition, nor render them nugatory by useless delays and discussions. . . . . The truth is, that, notwithstanding the opinion of some of the Government, every Portuguese into whose hand a firelock is placed, does not become a soldier capable of meeting the enemy. Experience, which the members of the Government have not had, has taught me this truth, and in what manner to make use of the different description of troops in this country; and it would be very desirable if the Government would leave, exclusively, to Marshal Beresford and me, the adoption of all military arrangements."†

It has been truly said, that the perusal of this correspondence is absolutely necessary to enable a person to have a just idea of the difficulties which Lord Wellington had to contend with, and of the strength of mind which enabled him to rise superior to them. There was not another general officer in the army whose patience would have stood the enormous draughts made upon it. As for fiery Picton and impetuous Craufurd, it may be seriously doubted whether they would not have shot patriarch and principal, and involved us in a war with our allies.

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vi. p. 494. † 'Id.' vol. vii. pp. 573-4

Campaign of 1811.—During the months of January and February, the hostile armies in Portugal remained in the same respective positions; the French knowing that the English would not be driven from the lines of Torres Vedras, and the English not knowing what movements the French intended to make.

A dear old friend and travelling companion has favoured me with the following amusing and characteristic anecdote:—

"There is one circumstance which I have never forfotten, though it occurred forty years ago. I was staying at head-quarters at Cartaxo during the winter of 1810—11. My superior officer and friend, Captain H——, was invited one day to dine at the Commander-in-chief's; for Lord Wellington occasionally invited regimental officers, and even young subalterns, if they attracted his notice or brought any introduction to his lordship. I remember a Tyrolese officer, one of Hofer's sacred band, who had found his way to Portugal; he obtained a commission in a Portuguese regiment, and was killed soon after, in our advance. He had letters for Lord Wellington, presented them, and was asked to dinner the same day. Being a blunt, honest German, and speaking very little English, he must have afforded some entertainment to his noble entertainer and staff. But to return to Capt. H——. He dined with Lord Wellington some day either at the end of January or the beginning of February 1811, and when he came back to our quarters at night I asked him—of course with some degree of curiosity and anxiety—if anything had been said at table concerning our prospects in the ensuing campaign. Lord Wellington, as may be supposed, never spoke upon military operations before company; but it so happened that, that evening, some one among the guests, perhaps an officer high in rank, ventured to say,—'I wonder what Massena will do next.' Looking at the guest, his lordship said, in a hurried manner,—'They will *march* in March,' and said no more. These were the words that Captain H—— repeated to me that evening, at least a month or five weeks before the breaking up of the French from Santarem, which, sure enough, took place in the month of March, when they began their retreat to the frontiers of Spain. But at the time the words were uttered we had no idea in the army that the French would be gone so soon; we knew that Massena was being reinforced, and the opposition papers at home were loud in their forebodings of a formidable renewed attack upon us in the spring."

Meanwhile, Buonaparte's 9th corps, under Drouet, had entered Portugal by the valley of the Mondego, with a large convoy of provisions from Spain, and had reinforced Massena's army. At the same time, Marshal Soult, who commanded the army of Andalusia, received orders from Napoleon himself to act in concert with Massena, by attacking Portugal south of the Tagus; and a new French army, under Marshal Bessières, was formed in the north of Spain, consisting of about 70,000 men, this Marshal being ordered to support the army of Portugal. Buonaparte was intent on his favourite scheme of crushing by immense masses. "Make a bridge across the Tagus," said he, "and let Massena and Soult form a junction; meantime keep the English in check, and make them lose men every day by engagements of the advanced guards; their army is small, and they cannot afford to lose many men; besides, people in London are much alarmed about their army in Portugal; and when the season becomes favourable let the main operations be carried on on the south bank of the Tagus."*

Such were the gigantic efforts made by the master of half of Europe to crush an English army of 30,000 men, whilst Lord Wellington, after urgent applications to ministers at home, received reinforcements to the amount of from 6,000 to 7,000 men only in the beginning of March. But yet a horrible disaster for the French was at hand. Massena was waiting for Soult to appear on the left bank of the Tagus opposite to his position, but Soult was obliged to maintain the blockade of Cadiz, in which there was a British garrison of 6,000 men; he was obliged to leave Sebastiani on the side of Granada and Murcia to keep in check the Spanish armed parties, and he could not therefore dispose of more than 20,000 men, with whom he durst not enter Alemtejo, leaving the Spanish fortress of Badajoz in his rear. He therefore began by attacking the fortress of Olivença, which he took on the 22nd of January, and then marched to Badajoz. On the 19th of February he defeated a Spanish force of nearly 12,000 men under General Mendizabal, which was posted on the river Gebora, an affluent of the Guadiana, and then sat down to besiege Badajoz.

"You will observe," wrote Lord Wellington to his brother Henry, "the fate of Olivença for want of provisions, and I am sadly afraid that Badajoz is not much better off. The

* Letters from Berthier, at the head of the war department in Paris, to Massena and Soult, in Appendix to vol. iii. of Napier's 'War in the Peninsula.'

Spaniards have had the whole province of Estremadura open to them since the beginning of last July; and it was particularly settled between the Marques de la Romaña and me, not only that the abundant harvest of Estremadura should supply his garrisons, but that a large magazine should be formed for my army. To form these magazines, however, required arrangement, foresight, and activity, and there our allies invariably fail us. If it be true that there are no provisions in Badajoz, the French will undoubtedly get that place, if they only approach it; and then there will be a fine breeze."* Badajoz, being better supplied than he had anticipated, detained Soult for some time.

In the mean while, Massena remained in his position at Santarem, waiting for Soult's appearance on the Tagus, till he became so distressed for provisions that he could wait no longer. All the means of collecting provisions by violence were exhausted, large moveable columns had been sent at different times both on the side of Castellobranco and on that of the Mondego, which scoured the country and carried away cattle and provisions, committing horrible excesses, which were retaliated by the infuriated peasantry upon the French stragglers and wounded. The discipline of the army was broken by this barbarous system of warfare; they had no less than 10,000 sick, no news from Spain, and no more provisions left than would serve the troops during their retreat to the frontiers. In the beginning of March, Massena moved his sick and baggage by degrees to the rear, and after demonstrations in various directions, the divisions of his army filed off in the direction of Pombal. Santarem was evacuated in the night of the 5th, and next morning it was entered by the English. Massena, however, had gained two days march, and his army was not overtaken by the English till the 10th, when it was concentrated on a table-land before Pombal, presenting a front of resistance. There was some skirmishing with the light division, whilst Wellington brought up his other divisions, but the French, having gained time for their baggage to file off, retreated on the 11th through the town. A detachment which Ney had left in the castle of Pombal was driven away with some loss by the English, and in the night Massena continued his retreat. On the 12th, the English advance found Ney with the French rear-guard posted on a high table-land in front of the village of Redinha, when another skirmishing took place. As the French seemed disposed to stand their ground, and made a

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 166.

show of considerable force, Lord Wellington formed his army in line and moved on to the attack, when, after a general discharge from the French battalions, which hid them in smoke, the French were again in full retreat through the village, and joined that evening the main body at Condeixa, where one road leads to Coimbra and another ascends the valley of the Mondego. Massena's intention was to seize Coimbra and, if possible, Oporto, and there to wait for reinforcements from Spain, and he had sent a division under Montbrun to secure the bridge of Coimbra. Wellington had foreseen his intention, and had ordered Wilson and Trant, with the Portuguese militia, to look to the security of the important town of Oporto, and to abandon the line of the Mondego, which river was fordable in many places, and retire across the Douro. Coimbra was thus exposed to attack. But it fortunately happened that Trant lingered behind at that town with a small force, and having destroyed one arch of the bridge and placed guards at the fords, he determined to defend the place, calculating that, if he could parry a *coup-de-main*, Marshal Massena, with Lord Wellington at his heels, would not stay long on the left bank of the Mondego. On the 11th, Montbrun appeared in the suburbs, and on the 12th, making an attempt to force the bridge, he was repulsed with grape-shot. Upon this, Massena relinquished the idea of crossing the Mondego, and determined to retreat by Ponte de Murcella and the left bank. Thus Coimbra was saved from French fury. If he could have crossed the river he would have found supplies, but the country through which he was now to move was quite exhausted.

Massena resumed his retreat on the 13th in rather a confused manner, being on the point of having his left turned by Picton's division, which had taken a short cut by a rugged path across the mountains of Ancião. Ney, with the rear-guard, set fire to the town of Condeixa, in order to stop the passage of the British artillery and powder-waggons. But our light division rushed through the burning town, and followed the flying enemy as fast and close as obstacles prepared on the road would permit. With part of his column Picton overtook their rear, cut in between their columns, separated them from one another, and nearly made Ney prisoner. The darkness of night saved the French from further disasters. They scrambled over the mountains in that darkness, and got together again. The English must also have marched in the night, for on the morning

of the 14th, when the fog which enveloped the mountains began to clear, Marshal Ney was discovered posted on a hill near Casal Nova. The most advanced part of our light division engaged immediately, and the 52nd regiment suffered some loss; but Picton's and Cole's divisions soon appeared on the left flank of the enemy and compelled them to renew their retreat. This Marshal Ney did with admirable skill and precision, moving from ridge to ridge, until he gained the strong defile of Miranda de Corvo, where the main body of the French was already posted. In the night, Massena, fearing that some of our divisions would get in his rear, set fire to the town of Miranda and passed the river Ceira, an affluent of the Mondego, destroying a great quantity of his baggage and ammunition, and leaving Ney to cover the passage of the river, without, however, risking an action. But Ney remained on the left bank of the river, in a rugged and defensible position, near the village of Fons d'Arronce. Here Lord Wellington found him at four o'clock in the afternoon on the 15th, and amusing his right with a feint attack, vigorously charged his left, while a battery of horse artillery, being advanced rapidly to a favourable point, opened hotly upon the French battalions, which were soon driven upon the river in such confusion, that many were drowned in attempting to discover the fords, and many were trampled to death on the bridge. In this panic the French lost at the least 500 men. Night put an end to the combat, but not to the confusion; for, as the French baggage and other encumbrances were pressing along the bridge, another panic spread among their troops, who, in the midst of the disorder, darkness, and a torrent of rain, fired upon one another. This affair on the Ceira was by far the most serious engagement that had yet taken place during the French retreat. In the night Ney blew up part of the bridge, and moved on his corps, keeping a rear-guard on the right bank the whole of the following day. The allies halted on the left bank that day (the 16th), partly because the river, swollen by the heavy rains, was not fordable, and partly because they were sadly in want of provisions, the regency at Lisbon having again neglected to collect supplies for the march. By his vigorous and skilful movements, Lord Wellington had succeeded in confining the army of Massena to one narrow line of retreat along the twice ravaged country between the mountains and the Mondego; but he had to follow in the same famine track, and to march through regions utterly bare of provisions and forage. While there

was abundance in Lisbon, some of the Portuguese brigades in the field with us were actually starving; many of their men fell off and died, and to save the rest the British supplies were shared with them. The British commissary-general's means were thus overlaid, and the movements of the army impeded. In an indignant yet quiet letter addressed to the Earl of Liverpool on this very day (the 16th of March), Wellington said—"Marshal Sir William Beresford and I had repeatedly urged the government of this kingdom to adopt measures to supply the troops with regularity, and to keep up the establishments while the army was in cantonments. Our representations were not attended to; and when the army was to move forward, the Portuguese troops had no provisions, nor any means of conveying any to them. They were to move through a country ravaged and exhausted by the enemy; and it is literally true that General Pack's brigade and Colonel Ashworth's had nothing to eat for four days, although constantly marching or engaged with the enemy." His lordship expected provisions to be brought round by sea in English vessels; and it appears some arrived during this busy day (the 16th), on the night of which a bridge upon trestles was thrown over the Ceira by the staff corps. On the morning of the 17th, our army crossed the bridge, and went in pursuit, the French having, according to their practice, withdrawn in the night. Wellington soon found his old adversary Massena at rest, and expecting a secure repose, for some time, behind the Alva, another affluent of the Mondego, the waters of which were swollen by the rains, while the two bridges which traversed it at Pombeiro and Ponte Murcella had been destroyed by his people, to prevent the passage of the English. So confident was the French marshal of a good breathing time, that he had sent out his foragers in strength to hunt for provisions. "We moved three divisions on Pombeiro," says Wellington, "and this put them all in a bustle." Disturbing the Marshal by a strong demonstration and a lively cannonade, his Lordship then menaced his left and rear by marching three divisions by the mountains of Quiteria to Arganil, on the Upper Alva, upon which Massena abandoned the Lower Alva, and continued his retreat by Moita towards Celorico, abandoning his foraging parties, who, to the number of 800, were taken by the English and Portuguese. The mass of our army, having crossed the Alva by a flying bridge, went in pursuit; but was obliged to halt at Moita for the old and cruel want—the want of provisions.

Again destroying much of his baggage and ammunition for want of cattle to drag it on, Massena distanced the allies; being, however, followed and watched by the light division of our cavalry until the 21st, when he reached Celorico and Guarda, and reopened his communications with the captured fortress of Almeida, and with the French on the frontier of Spain.

The retreat of Massena, properly speaking, may be considered as having terminated here. It had lasted a fortnight, during which the Marshal and his infuriated soldiers displayed a ruthless spirit. An eye-witness says:—"I pass over the destruction of Redinha, Condeixa, Miranda de Corvo, and many villages on the route; the burning of those towns covered the retrograde movements of the army, and something must be attributed to the disorder which usually attends a forced retreat; but the town of Leiria and the convent of Alcobaça were given to the flames by express orders from the French head-quarters; and, although the laws of war, rigorously interpreted, authorize such examples when the inhabitants take arms, it can only be justly done for the purpose of overawing the people, and not from a spirit of vengeance when abandoning the country. But every horror that could make war hideous attended this dreadful march. Distress, conflagration, death in all modes! from wounds, from fatigue, from water, from the flames, from starvation! On every side unlimited violence, unlimited vengeance! I myself saw a peasant hounding on his dog to devour the dead and dying,—and the spirit of cruelty, once unchained, smote even the brute creation. On the 15th, the French general, to diminish the encumbrances of his march, ordered a number of beasts of burthen to be destroyed; the inhuman fellow charged with the execution hamstrung 500 asses, and left them to starve, and thus they were found by the British army on that day. The mute but deep expression of pain and grief visible in these poor creatures' looks, wonderfully roused the fury of our soldiers, and so little weight has reason with the multitude when opposed by a momentary sensation, that no quarter would have been given to any prisoner at that moment. Excess of feeling would have led to direct cruelty. This shows how dangerous it is in war to listen to the passions at all, since the most praiseworthy could be thus perverted by an accidental combination of circumstances."*

* Napier, 'History of the War in the Peninsula,' vol. iii. pp. 471-2, Edition of 1832.

Lord Wellington, habitually sober and measured in the expression of his sentiments, assumed even a more decided and indignant tone. While following up Massena, he wrote to the Earl of Liverpool:—"I am sorry to be obliged to say that the conduct of the French throughout this retreat has been marked by a barbarity seldom equalled, and never surpassed. Even in the towns of Torres Novas, Thomar, and Pernes, in which the head-quarters of some of their corps had been for four months, and in which the inhabitants had been invited, by promises of good treatment, to remain, they were plundered, and many of their houses destroyed, on the night the enemy withdrew from their position, and they have since burnt every town and village through which they have passed. The convent of Alcobaça (a splendid structure) was burnt by orders from the French head-quarters. The bishop's palace, and the whole town of Leiria, in which General Drouet had had his head-quarters, shared the same fate; and there is not an inhabitant of the country, of any class or description, who has had any dealing or communication with the French army, who has not had reason to repent of it, and to complain of them. This is the mode in which the promises have been performed, and the assurances have been fulfilled, which were held out in the proclamation of the French commander-in-chief, in which he told the inhabitants of Portugal that he was not come to make war upon them, but, with a powerful army of 110,000 men, to drive the English into the sea. It is to be hoped that the example of what has occurred in this country will teach the people of this and of other nations what value they ought to place on such promises and assurances; and that there is no security for life, or for anything which makes life valuable, excepting in decided resistance to the enemy."*

Though it had not been starved out, the Spanish garrison of Badajoz had made but a feeble and disgraceful resistance. By signals and otherwise, the governor of that place had been informed that Massena was in full retreat; that he might expect English assistance as soon as it could be sent him; and that Lord Wellington expected he would hold out till the last extremity. His Lordship had made all the arrangements for detaching a force on Badajoz; and Sir William Beresford, with a considerable Portuguese force, was actually on his march, when the place surrendered to a corps of Soult's army numerically weaker than the garrison.

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 358.

It appears that on the 9th of March the French had made a breach in the place about eighteen feet wide; but which was by no means practicable. On the same day the Spanish governor acknowledged, by signal, the receipt of the message which Lord Wellington had sent him; yet on the 10th he suspended hostilities, and on the 11th he threw open his gates to become, with all his people, a prisoner of war. That inexplicable rogue or idiot, the governor of Badajoz, had been urged by Wellington to keep secret the intelligence of Massena's retreat, lest, by means of deserters, it should reach the enemy, whom his Lordship was in hopes to find engaged in the siege. But the governor published the intelligence as soon as he received it, stating at the same time that he did not believe it. He did more, he communicated the intelligence to the French general.* Verily these Spanish officers were enough to craze or disconcert any man co-operating with them. But Wellington calmly wrote,—"It is useless to add any reflection to these facts. The Spaniards have lost Tortosa, Olivença, and Badajoz, in the course of two months, without sufficient cause; and in the same period, Marshal Soult, with a corps never supposed to be more than 20,000 men, has taken (besides the last two places) or destroyed above 22,000 Spanish troops!†

"However unfortunate the Spanish armies have been in the field, the defences which they have made of several places were calculated to inspire confidence in the exertions of the troops at Badajoz; particularly considering that they had plenty of provisions and ammunition, that their cannons were still mounted on the works; and, above all, that they were certain of being relieved. This confidence has, however, been disappointed. . . . It is useless now to speculate upon the consequences which would have resulted from a more determined and protracted resistance at Badajoz. Sir William Beresford is at Portalegre, and his troops will be collected there on the 22nd. Soult cannot remain north of the Guadiana, even under existing circumstances. If Badajoz were still in the possession of the allies, we might expect to free from the enemy, not only Estremadura, but also Andalusia."‡

His Lordship had not recalled Beresford on learning the fall of Badajoz, it being necessary that that general should be on the Guadiana to watch Soult, and manœuvre on his right. And on the 18th of March, while yet at Pombeiro, on the Alva, his Lordship had written to Beresford:—"Lose

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 371. † Id. p. 361. ‡ Id. p. 381.

no time in moving up, and attack Soult, if you can, at Campo Mayor. I will come to you, if I can; but if I cannot, do not wait for me. Get Castanos to join you, from Estremoz, with any Spanish troops he can bring with him."*

Soult was kept in check by Beresford, and Wellington was still delayed for want of forage and provisions and draught cattle. On the 25th of March, the French abandoned Celorico, but retained possession of Guarda, which Massena was unwilling to give up, because he expected every hour to hear of Soult's advance, and dreaded the responsibility of abandoning Portugal altogether, without orders from his emperor. Warm and passionate discussions took place between him and Marshal Ney, who urged the necessity of an immediate march upon Almeida. Ney gave up his command in disgust, and went to Salamanca, and Massena gave Ney's corps to Loison. It appears that Massena, in his present position at Guarda, still calculated on being able to open a communication with Soult, and by his co-operation to maintain himself on the skirts of Portugal till he could get reinforcements and resume the offensive. This dream was dissipated on the morning of the 29th of March, by the sudden and simultaneous appearance of five of Lord Wellington's columns of attack ascending the Guarda mountain by five different roads or paths. This position, one of the strongest in the country, was abandoned by the French with much precipitation; without one effort for its defence, they hurried down the only road open to them, and crossed the Coa. Upon this river they halted till the 3rd of May. By a good disposition of his forces, Massena held command of some passes to the south, communicated with Almeida, guarded the bridges and fords on the Coa, and presented two bold fronts, covered by the river, and connected by the strong and convenient point of Sabugal. At daylight on the 3rd, Wellington put his men in motion: our light division passed the Coa on the left of the French, and drove in their light infantry; but the main body of the French advanced, and a rain-storm coming on at the moment, the men of our light division could not see that they were pushing too far. When the weather cleared up, the French, perceiving that only a small force had crossed the river, attacked it in columns with cavalry and artillery. Three times the 43rd and 52nd regiments were driven back towards the river, and three times they rallied and beat back their foes. Colonel Beck-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 372.

with, who was foremost in these fights, displayed as much ability as heroism. Taking advantage of a small stone enclosure, he made it good against all assaults. The combat was maintained with great fury by the French; but at last, seeing that Picton's division had crossed the Coa, and that our 5th division was pouring across the bridge of Sabugal, their whole army retreated upon Alfayetes having sustained considerable loss in men and also in baggage. This was called the combat of Sabugal, in which our light division, which did nearly all the work, lost about 200 men. Lord Wellington recorded it in his dispatches as "one of the most glorious actions that British troops were ever engaged in." On the 4th, the French were on the extreme frontier of Portugal, and on the 6th they crossed the Agueda into Spain, not without a serious loss inflicted on their rear by our light cavalry and horse artillery. Thus terminated their third and last invasion of Portugal. They left a garrison in Almeida, which was blockaded by the English immediately. The horn of "the spoiled child of victory," as Massena was called in the French army, was sadly lowered; and our great General had effected his purpose and delivered Portugal. "Nevertheless," says Captain Sherer, "those public men and public prints at home, whose patriotic care it was to disparage the exploits of Wellington, and to exalt the generalship of the French, described the retreat of Massena as '*a mere change of position from the Zezere to the Agueda*,' as a manœuvre to lead the allies to a distance from their resources, and to approach his own. Thus spoke the opposition, both in and out of Parliament; but the people of England held very different language."*

Considerably more than half of the invading army had perished. On the 9th of April, Wellington wrote to Lord Liverpool:—"The enemy's loss in this expedition to Portugal is *immense;* I should think no less than 45,000 men, including the sick and wounded."†

I again quote from an officer, who was an eye-witness of most of the horrors attendant upon Massena's retreat:—

"A great part of the loss of the French in killed was from the hands of the Portuguese peasantry, who revenged themselves for the injuries which had been inflicted on their countrymen during the six or seven months that the French had remained in Portugal, by killing every straggler whom they could lay their hands upon before the heads of the British columns came up. They killed those who fell be-

* 'Military Memoirs of the Duke.' † 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 448.

hind from sickness, as well as those who straggled for the purpose of marauding or seeking for food; they killed the wounded who were left behind for want of means of transport, as well as those who dropped down from weakness and fatigue; they killed them with their knives, or dashed out their brains with stones, or with the long knobbed sticks which the Portuguese peasantry carry on their shoulders. The appearance of the British advance (for the British army always protected the prisoners) made the Portuguese leave their work of death at times unfinished, and they left their victims, whom they generally stripped stark naked, to die in the fields right and left of the line of march. The writer of this article, then a very young man, speaks from recollection. It was on the 10th of March, on the road from Payalva to Pombal, that he saw the first dismal traces of the disastrous retreat of the French: bodies of dead soldiers, carts broken down on the road, carcasses of horses and mules; and from that day till he arrived at Celorico, on the 29th of March, there was hardly a day on which he did not see numbers of dead bodies scattered about the fields right and left of the road, generally naked, most of whom had no marks of wounds from firearms, and had either died of disease, of which many of them bore evidence, or had been finished by the peasantry in the manner described. One day he remembers counting them; and in a few hours of the march he reckoned between 100 and 200, till he felt too sick to reckon any more. He became at last familiarized with the sight, for men become used to any sight, however offensive, by continual repetition of it. Some of the poor creatures seemed to have crawled or been dragged out of the road to die behind the loose stone-walls with which the fields are enclosed; and, on looking over the stone-walls into the fields, they were seen lying in clusters of three or four or more, in all sorts of positions. A few were still breathing. It was a horrid sight. He also remembers once or twice seeing Portuguese villagers, men and women, insulting and kicking the bodies of dead Frenchmen on the road, when they were properly reproved and driven away by a British non-commissioned officer. A Portuguese farmer in the Estrella showed him the uniforms of four or five Frenchmen whom he had surprised singly, and killed in his neighbourhood during the winter. It was chiefly in the mountains of the Estrella that the work of destruction had been carried on during the winter of 1810-11. The French marauding parties went hunting for provisions in those

sequestered valleys, and when they fell upon a hamlet or farmhouse they showed no mercy to the inmates. Sometimes in the mountains they pounced upon several families huddled together in a cave, with a provision of Indian corn or pulse to last them for the winter. The males were soon despatched, the females spared for a time, but not in mercy. It happened, however, at times that these marauding parties were small, and they were overpowered by the peasantry, who gave no quarter.

"A body of two or three hundred men, of General Foy's escort, on his return from France, were crossing the Estrella summit by Covilhao, in the midst of the winter, when they were benighted; some died of cold, and the rest, being attacked in the morning by the Portuguese peasants, could not use their arms, as their fingers were benumbed, and they were all killed. General Gardanne, with a body of about 3,000 men, advanced, in November 1810, from the frontiers of Spain with a supply of ammunition and other necessaries for the army of Massena; he took the road by Sabugal and the Lower Beira as far as Cardigos. They were within a few leagues of Massena's outposts on the Zezere, when, alarmed at their own situation, being nearly surrounded by the Portuguese militia, and being afraid of not meeting with Massena at last, they retired into Spain with considerable loss. In the latter part of the following December, Massena sent a body of 2,000 men, cavalry and infantry, to forage, or, in other words, to plunder the district of Castellobranco. The town of Castellobranco was a considerable place, and as its situation was remote from the actual scene of warfare, the people were off their guard. On Christmas-eve, whilst most of the inhabitants were in the churches, the French rushed in, and a scene of outrage and bloodshed ensued, which is easier to imagine than to describe. Next morning, some order being restored, the officer who commanded the division demanded of the local magistrates a supply of stores, shoes, clothes, &c., for the army, which being complied with, in a few days the French quitted the place."*

This will give the reader some idea of the system of war carried on by Buonaparte's armies, according to his once applauded principle—"Let war support war." It was, indeed, a principle of the Tartar kind! The French general, Foy, himself, says, "Like the avalanche rushing down from the summit of the Alps into the valley beneath, our in-

* André Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke.'

numerable armies, by their mere passage, destroyed, in a few hours, the resources of a whole country. They habitually bivouacked, and where they halted our soldiers demolished houses which had stood for half a century, in order to construct with their materials those long right-lined villages which were frequently destined to last but for a day. When forest timber was not at hand, fruit-trees of the most valuable kind, such as the olive, mulberry, and orange-trees, were felled for fuel. Had they waited for food till the administration of the army served them with rations, they might have starved. The young conscripts, transported by a magic power from their homes to the extremities of Europe, intermingled all at once with men of all countries, and irritated by want and danger, contracted a moral intoxication, of which we cared not to cure them, because it prevented their sinking under unparalleled fatigues. . . . . This disorder being considered inevitable, it was not possible to fix its limits: it attached itself to the war of invasion like a consuming cancer. The scourge became still more fearful when exasperated passions put arms into the hands of men who were not called by their condition in life to bear them. The war between army and people partook of the nature of civil war, in which crimes are perpetrated on both sides which excite neither disgust nor horror. Our soldiers, generous in their relations with other warriors, were inexorable towards the patriot who had taken up arms to defend the fruit of his garden, or the honour of his daughter: the tool concealed beneath the garb of labour seemed to them the poniard of the disguised assassin. The military reports now presented nothing but a series of villages plundered, and towns taken by assault; and if it happened that the ministers of a God of peace transformed themselves into leaders of insurrection, one cannot be surprised that young soldiers, though accustomed to religious practices, threw aside their former habits, and violated churches, convents, and even the asylum of the grave."*

Knowing what I know of the French soldiery, and of the temper and outrageous infidelity of those times, I much doubt whether any part of Massena's army was, in the slightest degree, "accustomed to religious practices." But the conclusion of all General Foy's remarks is, that whenever a people are determined not to submit to the invader, a war of extermination must ensue. We regret to see this sentiment nearly shared by a gallant English officer; who is at the same time

* Foy, 'Histoire de la Guerre de la Peninsule.'

an accomplished and eloquent English writer. Napier, the historian of our Peninsular war, would never have the population of a country take up arms against a regular invading army: he would have people trust for their protection solely to such regular forces as their governments may have in the field. Seeing what the armies of their country were, it was well that the Spaniards had no conception of Napier's system.

But let me now quote Lord Wellington's calm observations to those who asked why he could not make war like the French, and go on with his army, as the French troops did, without pay, provisions, or magazines. "The French army is certainly a wonderful machine; but if we are to form such an one, we must form such a government as exists in France, which can with impunity lose one-half of the troops employed in the field every year, only by the privations and hardships imposed upon them. Next, we must compose our army of soldiers drawn from all classes of the population of the country; from the good and middling, as well in rank as in education, as from the bad; and not as other nations, and we in particular do, from the bad only. Thirdly, we must establish such a system of discipline as the French have; a system founded upon the strength of the tyranny of the government, which operates upon an army composed of soldiers, the majority of whom are sober, well-disposed, amenable to order, and in some degree educated. When we shall have done all this, and shall have made these armies of the strength of those employed by the French, we may require of them to live as the French do, viz., by authorized and regular plunder of the country and its inhabitants, if any should remain; and we may expose them to the labour, hardships, and privations which the French soldier suffers every day; and we must expect the same proportion of loss every campaign, viz., one-half of those who take the field."*

On the 10th of April, when the last of the French had cleared out of the country, his lordship issued a proclamation to the Portuguese nation, in which, among other things, he said:—"The Portuguese now know by experience, that the Marshal-General was not mistaken either in the nature or the amount of the evil with which they were threatened, or respecting the only remedies to avoid it; viz., decided and resolute resistance, or the removal and concealment of all

* Letter to the Marquis Wellesley. 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 195.

property, and of everything which could tend to the subsistence of the enemy, or to facilitate his progress.

"Nearly four years have now elapsed since the tyrant of Europe first invaded Portugal with a powerful army. The cause of this invasion was not self-defence; it was not to seek revenge for insults offered, or injuries done by the benevolent sovereign of this kingdom; it was not even the ambitious desire of augmenting his own political power, as the Portuguese government had, without resistance, yielded to all the demands of the tyrant; but the object was, the insatiable desire to plunder, the wish to disturb the tranquillity, and to enjoy the riches of a people who had passed nearly half a century in peace.

"The same desire occasioned the invasion of the northern provinces of Portugal in 1809, and the same want of plunder the invasion of 1810, now happily defeated; and the Marshal-General appeals to the experience of those who have been witnesses of the conduct of the French army during these three invasions, whether confiscation, plunder, and outrage are not the sole objects of their attention, from the General down to the soldier.*

"Those countries which submitted have not been better treated than those which have resisted. The inhabitants have lost all their possessions, their families have been dishonoured, their laws overturned, their religion destroyed, and, above all, they have deprived themselves of the honour of that manly resistance to their oppressor of which the people of Portugal have given so signal and so successful an example."

He warned the people of Portugal, that, although the danger was removed, it was not entirely over—that Buonaparte might yet endeavour to force them to submit to his iron yoke.

"They should be unremitting in their preparations for decided and steady resistance; those capable of bearing arms should learn the use of them; and those whose age or sex renders them unfit to bear arms should fix upon places of security and concealment, and should make all the

* I know, upon many unquestionable authorities, that during this retreat, and on other occasions, Frenchmen, holding the rank of general officers, meanly plundered the people in whose houses they had quartered themselves. The late Sir George Murray told me that he was once quartered in the house of a respectable Portuguese family, which had been vacated the day before by a French General, who had carried off every thing that was worth taking, even down to a little silver ornament in which the family had served his Excellency the General with toothpicks —in the Portuguese fashion—after dinner.

arrangements for their easy removal to them when the moment of danger shall approach. . . . . Measures should be taken to conceal or destroy provisions which cannot be removed, and everything which can tend to facilitate the enemy's progress; for this may be depended upon,—the enemy's troops seize upon everything, and leave nothing for the owner. By these measures, whatever may be the superiority of numbers with which the desire of plunder and of revenge may induce, and his power may enable the tyrant again to invade this country, the result will be certain."*

The people of Beira and Portuguese Estremadura, who had withdrawn from the open country upon the advance of Massena after the battle of Busaco, had caused a vast influx of population within or rather behind the lines of Torres Vedras. A part of this living stream had flowed down to Lisbon, and another had crossed to the south bank of the Tagus, entering districts which were safe from the French, and had not been devastated. These people were assisted partly by their own countrymen and partly by a gift of 100,000*l.*, voted by Parliament, and by voluntary subscriptions raised in England. They came in for a share of the cares, toils, and troubles which — apart from his duties as a military commander—constantly beset Lord Wellington; and it may safely be said that, but for his exertions and moral influence, many of those poor people must have perished for want. After the exit of Massena they returned to their homes, where the poorer classes received further assistance during the remainder of the year and in the following spring.

Having placed his army in cantonments between the Coa and the Agueda, his lordship set out for the south in order to see the state of affairs on the Guadiana. For a long time Soult had had his own way in that quarter; but the defeat of Marshal Victor at the battle of Barrosa, in Andalusia, by General Graham (the late veteran and venerable Lord Lynedoch), the advance of Beresford, and other incidents, had compelled Soult to return to Cadiz. Mortier, who succeeded Soult in command in Estremadura, laid siege to Campo Mayor, a weak place within the frontiers of Portugal, and very weakly garrisoned. The Portuguese commandant was obliged to surrender at last. Marshal Beresford, having been reinforced from the north by Lord Wellington, was advancing at the head of 22,000 men; and at his appearance, on the 25th of March, the French, evacu-

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. vii. pp. 455-6-7.

ating Campo Mayor, withdrew to Badajoz, after a warm skirmish with some of the British cavalry. Beresford had received orders from Wellington to invest Badajoz before the enemy should have time to provision and repair that fortress which they had so recently taken. Crossing the Guadiana, Beresford advanced into Spanish Estremadura—Mortier having retired before him—and placed his army in cantonments to cover the siege of Badajoz. He began by besieging and capturing Olivença. Affairs were at this point when, on the 20th of April, Lord Wellington arrived from the north, reconnoitred Badajoz, and ordered Beresford to push on the siege with vigour. Until that place should be recaptured, the allied armies could not safely penetrate into Spain, while the French could command an easy entrance into the southern provinces of Portugal, to which Badajoz was the key. While arrangements were making for the siege, his lordship was recalled to the north by Massena's movements; and, on the 28th of April, he was back again to his main army, and fixed his head-quarters at Villa Fermosa, near the Coa.

Having recruited his army to a considerable extent at Salamanca, and having obtained a reinforcement of cavalry from Marshal Bessieres, Massena moved from Ciudad Rodrigo, and crossed the Agueda with 40,000 infantry, 5,000 horse, and about 30 pieces of artillery, for the purpose of relieving the French garrison in Almeida. Expecting every day to be superseded in his command, he wished, before returning to Paris, to make one effort more for the sake of his own military character. To face him Lord Wellington could muster no more than 32,000 men, of which force only 1,200 were cavalry. His lordship, however, determined to fight rather than give up the blockade of Almeida. He drew back his army half-way between the Agueda and the Coa, and placed it in an extended line on a table-land between the two parallel rivers, Turones and Das Casas, which are both affluents of the Agueda; his left, leaning on Fort Conception, covered the blockade of Almeida; his centre lay opposite the village of Almeida, and his right was at Fuentes de Onoro, a fair village, and extended towards the hill of Nava d'Aver, on the road to Sabugal: the whole length of the line was about seven miles. The river Coa flowed in our rear, and there was only one bridge whereby to cross it in case of a retreat, the bridge of Castello Bom. The ground was open on the side of Fuentes de Onoro, which village soon

merited the name of "The Fountains of Honour," and there Massena resolved to attack in force, hoping to gain the village, turn Lord Wellington's right, push it upon its centre, and then drive the whole of that army back upon the Coa and its one narrow and perilous bridge. Towards evening, on the 3rd of May, the French left, under cover of a hot cannonade from a ridge which commanded the village, made a resolute assault upon Fuentes de Onoro. They carried the lower part of the village, and drove the English to the upper part, where the defence was, for a time, confined to a few strong houses and a chapel, which stood upon a rock. But Wellington, at the opportune moment, sent down a fresh brigade, and the French were driven back at the point of the bayonet. Massena fed his columns of attack with more and more reinforcements, and the struggle in the narrow streets of the village was awful. Repeatedly bayonets were crossed (that very rare occurrence in war), the French and English being occasionally intermixed. But no French troops ever yet stood such a contest with the British; and the assailants were soon driven out of the lower part of the village, and across the Das Casas river. Completely foiled in this desperate effort, Massena passed all the following day in reconnoitering, and in making plans of attack, which were all foreseen by Wellington and provided for. In the course of that day (the 4th of May) Marshal Bessieres, who had come up and joined Massena with a body of Buonaparte's Imperial Guards, reconnoitered also, declaring to his impatient and irritated colleague, that great caution and circumspection would be necessary against a commander so skilful and troops so steady as those now before them. On the morrow (5th), as early as three o'clock in the morning, the French columns were in motion, and at about six Massena made a grand attack on the British right with the greater part of his army, including the entire mass of his cavalry. Some irregular Spanish cavalry, under Don Julian Sanchez, which Wellington had placed on the hill of Nava d'Aver, at his extreme right, were very soon swept away; and our 7th light division, and other troops on our right, had to sustain the whole force and fury of Massena's columns. Our men formed into squares; but the numerous French cavalry fell upon the 7th division before it could effect that formation. The troops, however, stood firm; and although some were cut down by Montbrun's heavy horse, the enemy was checked by the steady fire of the Chasseurs Britanniques, a foreign regiment in the

British service, and of the other regiments of the 7th division. Lord Wellington, however, considering his position too far extended to the right, gave up the ground near Nava d'Aver and his communication with Sabugal, and ordered the 7th and light divisions to retire across the plain, and the 1st and 3rd divisions to wheel back and take up a new alignement on a steep ridge which runs from the Das Casas to the Turones. Such a movement, in the midst of a battle, is, at all times, difficult, and never to be attempted except with the steadiest troops. At this time the movement was well executed, though under very critical circumstances, for the British squares had to cross a vast open plain, exposed to the charge of that numerous French cavalry, supported by artillery, the British cavalry being too weak to give much protection. The non-combatants, who had gathered behind the first British line for protection, were hurrying away in panic and with loud lamentations, being driven and goaded by the French horsemen across the plain. It was a dangerous hour for England! and a most trying one for her greatest general!

"The whole of the vast plain, as far as the Turones, was covered with a confused multitude, amidst which the squares appeared but as specks; for there was a great concourse, composed of commissariat followers of the camp, servants, baggage, led horses, and peasants attracted by curiosity, and, finally, the broken piquets and parties coming out of the woods. The 7th division was separated from the army by the Turones; 5,000 French cavalry, with fifteeen pieces of artillery, were close at hand impatient to charge; the infantry of the 8th corps was in order of battle behind the horsemen; the wood was filled with the skirmishers of the 6th corps; and if the latter body, pivoting upon Fuentes, had issued forth, while Drouet's divisions fell on that village, while the 8th corps attacked the light division, and while the whole of the cavalry made a general charge, the loose multitude encumbering the plain would have been driven violently in upon the 1st division, in such a manner as to have intercepted the latter's fire, and broken their ranks. No such effort, however, was made; Montbrun's cavalry merely hovered about Craufurd's squares, the plain was soon cleared, the cavalry took post behind the centre, and the light division formed a reserve to the right of the 1st division, sending the riflemen among the rocks to connect it with the 7th division, which had arrived at Freneda, and was there joined by Julian Sanchez. At the sight of this new front, so deeply lined with troops,

the French stopped short, and commenced a heavy cannonade, which did great execution, from the closeness of the allied masses; but twelve British guns replied with vigour, and the violence of the enemy's fire abated; their cavalry then drew out of range, and a body of French infantry attempting to glide down the ravine of the Turones, was repulsed by the riflemen and light companies of the guards."*

By the movement which had been effected, the village of Fuentes de Onoro was now the left of our position, and Freneda beyond the Turones was our right. All the time of the combat on the ridge, and the movement across the plain, a fierce battle had been going on at Fuentes.

Massena had directed Drouet to carry the village as soon as Montbrun's cavalry should turn our right. But the village was again defended as stoutly as it had been on the 3rd. Again, there seemed different shiftings and changes of fortune: early in the contest that noble Highlander, Colonel Cameron, was mortally wounded, and three brave regiments (the 24th, 71st, and 79th) were driven from the lower parts of the village, by an attacking column of tremendous strength. At one time the very chapel on the rock, in the upper part of the village, was abandoned. The upper part of the village was, however, stiffly held; and the rolling of the musketry was there incessant. Lord Wellington, having all his reserves in hand, detached considerable masses to the support of the regiments in Fuentes; and Massena sent mass after mass to reinforce General Drouet. Having got the 71st and 79th into good order, and having joined the 88th to those two regiments which had severely suffered, Colonel Mackinnon turned upon the French with his infuriated brigade:—

"Wild from the plaided ranks the yell was given!"

and the Highlanders rushed to take vengeance for the fall of noble Cameron. The entire village was recovered; and, cleared of all the French, save their dead and their badly wounded. The battle was prolonged round the village, and on the banks of the stream till the fall of night, when Massena's column crossed the river, and retired to the distance of a cannon-shot from its banks. The French generals had committed various and gross blunders, scarcely to be expected from officers who had obtained so much celebrity; but on the British side there does not appear to have been a single mistake. Our total loss from the beginning of the

* Napier, 'Hist. of War in the Peninsula,' vol. iii. p. 514.

fighting on the 3rd, was 235 killed, 1,234 wounded, and 317 missing or prisoners. The loss of the French was far greater; 400 of their dead were counted in the village of Fuentes alone, strewing the streets or piled upon one another; many prisoners were taken, and intercepted letters showed that from 3,000 to 4,000 had been wounded either in the attacks on the village on the 3rd, or in this more general affair of the 5th.

The battle of Fuentes de Onoro was of importance in the eyes of the world, and to the military fame of our country, by being a regular pitched battle, fought by the British in a position (forced upon Wellington, unless he left Almeida open to Massena) of no particular strength, and, indeed, weak at one point, and fought with a very inferior force. A good part of the disciplined Portuguese were away in the south with Beresford, so that the great majority of the troops engaged were British-born soldiers. Two of our divisions, the 5th and 6th, were posted far on the left to protect the blockade of Almeida, and, being observed all the time by a superior French force, they could take no part in the engagements. There were only four British divisions of infantry, one Portuguese brigade, and about 1,000 horse actually engaged against three entire corps of infantry and nearly 5,000 cavalry; for Montbrun, expecting to decide the battle by that one *coup*, moved with all his squadrons when the British were traversing the open plain.* The Portuguese engaged appear to have done their duty manfully, although they had received no pay for months, and had been left by their government on their usual low diet.

Massena avowedly fought the battle of Fuentes de Onoro, for the purpose of relieving Almeida; and in that purpose he completely failed. The French army remained quiet throughout the 6th and 7th. Lord Wellington, expecting a renewal of the struggle, threw up some works in the upper village, and upon the position behind it. But upon the 8th the French testified that they would fight no more there, by withdrawing from their ground; and upon the 10th, they crossed the Agueda into Spain.

Buonaparte, before this, had come to the conclusion that Massena was not the man to drive Wellington out of Portugal, and he had sent Marshal Marmont, a younger officer, to supersede him. The order by which the former "Favourite of Fortune" was ordered to give up the com-

* 'Wellington Dispatches.' Napier, 'Hist. of War in the Peninsula.' Sherer, 'Military Memoirs.' A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke.

mand, was harsh, ungenerous, and unfeeling; but Massena had slight claims to the sympathy of any one, and this measure was what Buonaparte meted to nearly all his unsuccessful generals. Massena was allowed to take with him to Paris only his son, and one aide-de-camp. He had finished his last act, and played out its last scene in defeat and disgrace: he appeared no more on the stage where he had first presented himself as a common sergeant, a deserter, and a traitor.*

Nearly at the same time Marshal Ney, General Junot, and General Loison repaired to Paris, whither Joseph Buonaparte had gone before them. They all left behind them evil names, and carried with them hatreds, jealousies, and fierce recriminations of one another. *La guerre d'Espagne*, a word of ill omen before their return, took a more sinister sound and signification when Massena, Ney, Loison, and the very rash and talkative Junot had been a week in the French capital.

Lord Wellington had frequently occasion to report the humanity and generosity of his British soldiers. A few days after the battle of Fuentes de Onoro, in a letter addressed to Mr. Perceval, then our prime minister, thanking him for attending to his charitable recommendation in favour of the distressed Portuguese people, his lordship said,—"My soldiers have continued to show to them every kindness in their power, as well as to the Spaniards. The village of Fuentes de Onoro having been the field of battle the other day, and not being much improved by this circumstance, they immediately and voluntarily subscribed to raise a sum of money, to be given to the poor inhabitants as a compensation for the damage which their properties had sustained in

* Massena was a native of Nice and a subject of the King of Sardinia, whose flag he deserted to join the French Republican Army, at that time preparing for the invasion of Italy.

On his homeward journey through Spain, Massena narrowly escaped falling into the avenging hands of Mina, and the fierce guerillas led by that famous chief.

In Navarre, Mina, the most active and able of the guerilla leaders (with the exception, perhaps, of Porlier), defeated, on the 22nd of May, at the Puerto d'Arlaban, near Vittoria, 1,200 men, who were escorting a convoy of prisoners and treasure to France. Massena, whose baggage was captured, was to have travelled with this escort, but, disliking the manner of the march, he had remained in Vittoria to wait a better opportunity, and so escaped. These guerilla bands were almost always merciless; after the fight they murdered in cold blood six Spanish ladies who, in defiance of patriotism, had attached themselves to French officers.—Napier, 'Hist. of War in the Peninsular.'

the contest."* At the same time the wounded and the sick Portuguese soldiers, having no hospitals of their own, were taken into our hospitals, where our men shared with them whatever little comforts they could procure.

A few days after Massena's retreat, the French garrison in Almeida evacuated the place, blew up some of the works, fled by night, and getting across the Agueda, joined their main army, though not without the loss of 400 men, the third part of their entire force, and the loss of their artillery, ammunition, baggage, and everything except the ragged clothes on their backs, their side-arms, and muskets. But for some negligence on the part of our blockading divisions scarcely a man of that garrison could have escaped. Lord Wellington was exceedingly annoyed; and he did not fail to express his sentiments to some of the commanding officers, who ought to have been better prepared for the sortie of the French, seeing that they had no alternative but to make a desperate attempt to fly by night, or surrender at discretion.

Marmont had been ordered to take the command of the army of Portugal with a firm hand; but this marshal, finding that he could do nothing more than continue the retreat which Massena had commenced, retired to Salamanca, and put the disheartened, half naked, and half starving army into cantonments.

Lord Wellington set out once more for the south. But before he could arrive on the Guadiana, great events had taken place in that quarter. By the 4th of May—the day which intervened between the two conflicts at Fuentes—Beresford had invested Badajoz. But Soult was now marching back from Seville to relieve and then reinforce the garrison of that important place. The departure from Madrid of Joseph Buonaparte, had left disposable a considerable body of French troops, which that timid usurper had considered necessary for the protection of his own person and flitting ephemeral government; some troops, too, had been drawn from the corps of General Sebastiani, so that Soult, the best or most skilful of the French marshals, was bringing a great accession of strength to the army, which he had been compelled to leave two months before by the daring movements of General Graham in Andalusia. In the same interval, however, some Spanish generals and a Spanish army had gradually collected in Estremadura, to co-operate with Beresford in pressing the siege of Badajoz.

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii.

If Marshal Beresford had been properly supplied with the *materiel* and means of pushing the siege vigorously, he might—as the French had then had but little time for preparation—have possibly breached and taken Badajoz before Soult could get near it; but Beresford had hardly anything that was needful except courage and good will; he had scarcely any entrenching tools; his train of artillery was contemptible, his cannon balls did not fit the breaching guns which had been sent to him, the howitzers were too small for his shells, and it should seem that he had with him no very skilful artillery or engineer officer. The soil was hard and rocky, and Beresford's people, besides being insufficient in number, were but little accustomed to trenching, mining, and the other operations of sieges. In these particulars the whole British army was defective, for it had not at the time a single corps of sappers and miners. [If the Government had only thought of sending out from England a few hundred of the men called *navigators*, with their proper tools, our siege work would have been done in perfection, and with a rapidity which no soldiers, or sappers and miners, or labourers of any other class or country could have equalled.] Very little progress had been made in the siege when Beresford received intelligence that Soult was rapidly advancing. This was on the night of the 12th of May; and on the following morning our General, far too weak to attend to two objects at once, raised the siege and prepared to fight Soult in a pitched battle, and on an open field.

Having removed their artillery, stores, &c., the allies took post on the memorable ridge of ALBUERA: they were between 7,000 and 8,000 British infantry, several of the Portuguese brigades, which Beresford had so admirably disciplined, the Spanish corps of Blake and Castaños, and about 2,000 cavalry—in all about 27,000 men. But the Spaniards, who formed more than 10,000 of this total, had scarcely been disciplined at all, and were but little to be depended upon. Another Spanish brigade, under Don Carlos d'España, arrived at Albuera on the 14th; and on the evening of the 15th (while Lord Wellington was still on the Coa), after a day of heavy rain, Soult came up with about 19,000 chosen infantry, about 4,000 cavalry, and 50 guns. As at Fuentes de Onoro, the ground was very favourable for cavalry. The French marshal immediately reconnoitred our position, and determined upon an attack, in force, on the right flank, which

was occupied by Blake's Spanish corps, the British holding the centre, and the Portuguese the left.

At eight o'clock on the following morning, the French troops were seen in full motion, dense masses of infantry and clouds of cavalry rolling towards Blake's division, while two heavy columns of infantry and some horse, marching out of a wood, pointed towards the front of the allied position, as if to attack the bridge and the unroofed, ruined village of Albuera. Other demonstrations were made, as though Soult intended to attack the British centre in front; but Beresford saw that this was but a feint, and he immediately sent the alert Colonel Hardinge to request that Blake would change his front so as to face the French, who assuredly meant to attack the Spanish right. The Spanish general refused, doggedly insisting that the real attack of Soult was against the centre, by the bridge of Albuera. The truth appears to have been that Blake knew very well that if he attempted, with his undisciplined rabble, to change front, or to make any other evolution in the presence of an active and highly-disciplined enemy, they would fall into irremediable confusion, and either throw down their arms and ask for quarter, or fly—to be pursued and cut to pieces. But when the attempt to manœuvre had become infinitely more difficult than it was when Colonel Hardinge gave Blake his order to change front—when the French were actually appearing on the table-land on his right, and getting ready to enfilade nearly the whole position of the allies—that presumptuous, self-willed man proceeded to make the evolution with pedantic slowness. And forthwith, attacked by the French, the Spaniards gave way in disorder, leaving, for a moment, the British centre entirely exposed, and too truly telling the English soldiers what little assistance they were to expect from such allies. The day might have been considered by a less brave man than Beresford as already lost. "Two-thirds of the French were in a compact order of battle on a line perpendicular to his right, and his army, disordered and composed of different nations, was still in the difficult act of changing its front. . . . . The Spaniards were in disorder at all points, and Soult, thinking the whole army was yielding, pushed forward his columns, while his reserves also mounted the hill, and General Ruty placed all the batteries in position."*

As the heights the enemy had gained raked and entirely commanded our old position, it became necessary to make every effort to retake and maintain them; and a noble effort

* Napier.

was made by the brigades of the 2nd British division. The 1st of these brigades (General Colborne's), while in the act of deploying on the ascent of the hill under a heavy fire of French artillery from the ridges which Blake and his Spaniards ought to have held, was attacked in front and rear by the French cavalry and the fierce Polish lancers, who, concealed by a heavy storm of rain and the thick smoke from the firing, passed round the flank of the hill, and committed dreadful havoc. Wherever these Poles had served the French—whether in Italy, Egypt, Germany, Spain, or Portugal,—they had distinguished themselves by their savage ferocity as much as by their bravery and their address as light cavalry. On the present, as on other occasions, these lancers, with their blood-red pennons shaking under the heads of their lances, rode madly over the field to spear the wounded and finish them where they fell. The tremendous slaughter made upon Colborne's brigade would, however, have been still greater, if these Poles had not thus lost time in gratifying their unsoldier-like appetite for blood and death; or if, instead of scattering themselves over the hill, they had kept together with the French dragoons, and pursued their first advantage, which had been chiefly owing to surprise. Two British regiments were almost annihilated; but the 31st, (the left of Colborne's brigade of three regiments) which fortunately had not begun to deploy, escaped the cavalry charge and manfully kept its ground under Major l'Estrange. While this stern fighting was in progress on the hill, some Spanish corps, regardless that their fire was falling fast, not upon the French, but upon the English ranks, kept up a mad, blind, unabating fusilade; but when ordered to advance, and succour men who were perishing through the celerity with which they had rushed to cover and assist them, no power could move them forward. At one time Beresford seized a Spanish ensign and dragged him forward with the colours, hoping that the useless regiment would be inspirited to follow. Not a man stirred, and the standard-bearer flew back to his herd, as soon as the marshal relaxed his grasp. Houghton's brigade, the next of the two brigades which had been sent forward to recover possession of the ridge, soon reached the summit, joined the immoveable 31st, and maintained a most desperate struggle against an immensely superior force, and against all arms — artillery, infantry, cavalry, both light and heavy. When we shall see a well authenticated instance of the troops of any other nation

gaining and keeping such a position against such odds, then we may qualify, or waver in, our national faith that the British infantry is the best in the world.* Houghton's men, however, fell fast, and his ammunition, expended in a rapid, sustained fire, began to fail. At the same moment another and a fresh French column appeared moving round the right flank of the hill. Marshal Beresford now thought of retreat, and it is said that orders were on the point of being issued to commence it. But there was a young, quick-sighted, noble-hearted officer on the field, who saw that the battle might yet be won. This was Colonel, now General Viscount Hardinge, who had shown the greatest intrepidity, activity, vigilance, and address in Sir John Moore's unfortunate campaign, who had been at the side of that general on the hard fought field of Coruña when he received his death-wound, who had raised the dying veteran from the ground, tried to stop the effusion of blood with his sash, and then assisted in carrying him to the rear, displaying the delicate tenderness of a woman united with the fortitude of a Christian warrior. Colonel Hardinge, who was now acting as deputy quarter-master-general to the Portuguese troops, without waiting for Marshal Beresford's orders, hurled General Cole's division against the French. With this division, which consisted only of the English fusilier brigade and of one Portuguese brigade, Cole moved forward. It was this British fusilier brigade that restored the fight, and saved the allied army from a fearful catastrophe. While the Portuguese brigade, under General Harvey, moved round the shoulder of the hill on the right, and some troops under Colonel Abercrombie moved round on the left, Cole himself led the matchless fusiliers straight up the fatal hill, which was now completely crowned by the French masses and their artillery. Two or three flags of regiments and six British guns were already in the enemy's possession, and the whole of Soult's reserve was coming forward, *en masse*, to reinforce his columns on the ridge, from which the 31st and Houghton's thinned brigade seemed, at last, on the point of being swept. On the ridge and on the slopes the ground was heaped with dead bodies, and the Polish lancers were riding furiously about the captured English guns. But General Cole, at the head of his fusiliers, moved steadily onward and upward, dispersed those savage lancers, recovered our six guns, and appeared on the summit of the hill and on the right of

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

Houghton's brigade just as Abercrombie took post on its left. The military historian of these exciting events has given a most animated and perfect picture of the scene which followed. His description has often been quoted; but it would savour of presumption in any man to attempt to write another.

"Such a gallant line, issuing from the midst of the smoke, and rapidly separating itself from the confused and broken multitude, startled the enemy's heavy masses, which were increasing and pressing onwards as to an assured victory: they wavered, hesitated, and then, vomiting forth a storm of fire, hastily endeavoured to enlarge their front, while a fearful discharge of grape from all their artillery whistled through the British ranks. Sir William Myers was killed, Cole, and the three colonels, Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkshawe, fell wounded, and the fusilier battalions, struck by the iron tempest, reeled and staggered like sinking ships. Suddenly and sternly recovering, they closed on their terrible enemies, and then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights. In vain did Soult, by voice and gesture, animate his Frenchmen; in vain did the hardiest veterans, extricating themselves from the crowded columns, sacrifice their lives to gain time for the mass to open out on such a fair field; in vain did the mass itself bear up, and, fiercely arising, fire indiscriminately upon friends and foes, while the horsemen, hovering on the flank, threatened to charge the advancing line. Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry. No sudden burst of undisciplined valour, no nervous enthusiasm, weakened the stability of their order; their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in their front; their measured tread shook the ground; their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation; their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd, as foot by foot, and with a horrid carnage, it was driven by the incessant vigour of the attack to the farthest edge of the hill. In vain did the French reserves, joining with the struggling multitudes, endeavour to sustain the fight; their efforts only increased the irremediable confusion, and the mighty mass, giving way like a loosened cliff, went headlong down the steep. The rain flowed after in streams discoloured with blood, and 1,500 unwounded men, the remnant of 6,000 unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill."*

* Napier, 'Hist. of the War in the Peninsula,' vol. iii. p. 546.

"It was observed," wrote Beresford to the Commander-in-chief, "that our dead, particularly the 57th regiment, were lying, as they had fought, in ranks, and that every wound was in front." *

The day was now won as Hardinge had seen it might be, and Beresford ordering the Portuguese and Spaniards to advance, the French retreated in dismay and confusion across the Albuera river. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the firing, which had begun hotly at about 9 o'clock in the morning, ceased. The allies had lost, in killed and wounded, about 7,000 men, of whom more than two-thirds were British. The French were computed to have lost not less than 9,000 men, including two generals killed and three generals wounded.

Beresford warmly thanked Colonel Hardinge for the abilities he had displayed, and for the exertions he had made, and properly praised the heroic conduct of Major-General W. Stuart, Major-General Cole, Colonel Colborne, Major l'Estrange, and nearly all the distinguished officers who survived the murderous conflict, making especial mention of General Lumley, who did wonders with the comparatively weak cavalry under his command. †

The fighting had not been entirely on one point, for the French General Godinot, had made some efforts on our left and on the village of Albuera, from which he had been forced to desist by a threatened charge from Lumley's cavalry. In every crisis of the fight, and on every part of the field, Marshal Beresford was seen conspicuously: and if he committed errors as a general, his bravery as a man ought to have commanded the respect of many who have since treated his arrangements with unsparing severity. ‡

But if censure was showered upon his head for his management of this battle, and for his fighting it at all, it was certainly not by his considerate and generous minded Commander-in-chief. Wellington praised Beresford for having raised the siege of Badajoz without loss of ordnance or stores, and he did not hesitate to call the battle of Albuera a signal victory, gained by the marshal and his British soldiers in the most gallant manner. As soon as he heard of

* 'Dispatch to Lord Wellington,' dated Albuera, 18th of May.

† When the Polish lancers were on the hill-top butchering our two unfortunate regiments, and preparing to charge the 31st, Lumley rode at a gallop to the rescue. The British cavalry charged nobly. The lancers were in their turn taken in the rear; and numbers of these desperadoes fell beneath the sabres of Lumley's horsemen!

‡ 'Victories of the British Army.'

the battle, his lordship wrote to Beresford—"Your loss, by all accounts, has been very large.... You could not be successful in such an action without a large loss; and we must make up our minds to affairs of this kind sometimes, or give up the game."* His lordship joined to his admiration of the battle, his cordial concurrence in the favourable reports made by Beresford to the Government, of the good conduct of all who had been engaged in it. When he became acquainted with the facts, he attributed the great sacrifices which the battle had cost us, and the unmolested condition of the French after they had crossed the river, to the right cause.—"It was owing to the Spaniards, who could not be moved." "I should," said his lordship, "feel no anxiety about the result of any of our operations, if the Spaniards were as well disciplined as the soldiers of that nation are brave, and if they were at all moveable; but this is, I fear, beyond hope! All our losses have been caused by this defect. At Talavera, the enemy would have been destroyed, if we could have moved the Spaniards; at Albuera, the natural thing would have been to support the Spaniards on the right with the Spaniards who were next to them; but any movement of that body would have created inextricable confusion; and it was necessary to support the right solely with British, and thus the great loss fell upon our troops. In the same way, I suspect, the difficulty and danger of moving the Spanish troops was the cause that General Lapeña did not support General Graham at Barrosa."†

On the evening of the 16th, the day which had witnessed one of the most murderous conflicts of modern times, considering the number of troops engaged, Beresford improved his position; his freshest troops were placed in front, and some hundreds of spears and flags, taken from the Poles, were planted in defiance along the crest.‡ On the morrow, the 17th of May, the two armies remained in their respective positions, Beresford fully expecting to be attacked again. But the morning passed, and the afternoon, and the evening, and the night, without any movement on the side of Soult; and on the 18th, Kemmis's brigade of 1,500 English came up and joined Beresford on the ridge of Albuera, and then, late at night, Soult began to move off his wounded, and to prepare for his retreat upon Seville, which he commenced on the morning of the 19th, leaving behind

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 573. † Id. vol. vii. p. 599.
‡ Southey, 'Hist. of the Peninsular War.'

him 800 soldiers, severely wounded, to the generosity and humanity of the English. The French marshal had no doubt heard of the approach of Lord Wellington. On the very next day his lordship arrived at Albuera with two fresh divisions, and ordered that the siege of Badajoz should be instantly resumed. Through our deficiency in cavalry, Soult's retreat was not so much molested as it ought to have been; but, nevertheless, he lost some hundreds of men, and our weak horse defeated his strong rear-guard at Usagre.

Trenches were opened before Badajoz, and on the 5th of June, a breach being made, the assault was given. Through various wants and deficiencies in our siege appointments, this failed completely, nor did another attempt on the 9th prove more successful. These two assaults cost our army, in killed and wounded, 400 of our very best men. On the 10th, his lordship received certain intelligence that Marmont was marching from Salamanca to join Soult with the whole of his forces, and that Drouet's corps was advancing from Toledo, and would probably join Soult that very day. He therefore fell back, and took up a position on the heights near Campo Mayor, along the Portuguese frontier. Although the French brought together from 60,000 to 70,000 infantry, and 8,000 horse, while Wellington, counting Portuguese and some Spaniards, had not more than 56,000, of which only 3,500 were horse, the two French marshals would not venture to attack him on those heights; and after losing many days, Marmont, about the middle of July, separated from Soult, and marched back upon Salamanca. This rendered indispensable a corresponding movement to the northward on the part of Wellington; and his lordship, leaving General Hill with one British division, and the Portuguese troops in the Alemtejo, marched back to his old line of the Agueda, and established his head-quarters at Fuente Guinaldo. Here he was at no great distance from Ciudad Rodrigo, and, aiming at the recovery of that fortress, he caused it to be watched. Towards the end of September, Marmont, having received large reinforcements from France, advanced to the Agueda, and by his superiority of numbers, and especially of cavalry, obliged Wellington to withdraw to his old position on the Coa—whither the French did not choose to follow him.

Meanwhile General Hill obtained signal successes in the south. Marshal Soult had gone back again to Seville, and thence to Cadiz, to have an eye upon the interminable

blockade of the latter city. The French general, Gerard, was left near the Guadiana, at Arroyo Molinos; and here, on the 28th of October, he was surprised, surrounded, and completely routed by Hill, who took 1,500 men and several officers of rank prisoners, and seized the whole of his artillery, ammunition, stores, and baggage. General Hill then advanced to Merida, where he placed his troops in cantonments. In all Spanish Estremadura the French had now no firm footing except within the walls of Badajoz.

Thus terminated the campaign of 1811. Lord Wellington in the course of this year, besides having firmly established his complete possession of Portugal, had, by his operations within the Spanish frontiers, given employment to two French armies, and prevented the French from acting with vigour either against Gallicia in the north, or against Cadiz in the south. He had more than redeemed his pledge and promise to retain possession of Portugal, and make it a *point d'appui* for future operations against the French in Spain.

The opposition party at home, who would have withdrawn the army altogether had they been able, complained loudly of the expense. His lordship, in striking language, told ministers that it would cost much more to keep up a defensive army at home.

"I shall be sorry," he thus wrote to Lord Liverpool, on the 23rd March 1811, whilst he was following Massena's track of devastation, by the light of burning towns and villages, "I shall be sorry if Government should think themselves under the necessity of withdrawing from this country on account of the expense of the contest. From what I have seen of the objects of the French government, and the sacrifices they make to accomplish them, I have no doubt that, if the British army were for any reason to withdraw from the Peninsula, and the French government were relieved from the pressure of military operations on the continent, they would incur all risks to land an army in his Majesty's dominions. Then, indeed, would commence an expensive contest; then would his Majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge; and the cultivation, the beauty, and prosperity of the country, and the virtue and happiness of its inhabitants, would be destroyed, whatever might be the result of the military operations. God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor, in the scene; and I only hope that the

King's Government will consider well what I have above stated to your lordship, and will ascertain, as nearly as it is in their power, the actual expense of employing a certain number of men in this country, beyond that of employing them at home or elsewhere."*

The Spanish general, Blake, did not improve in military skill or wisdom after the battle of Albuera. Risking another battle by himself near Valencia, he was, of course, defeated by Suchet. He then shut himself up in the city of Valencia with his whole army—the last Spanish army which had remained in the field—and there, in the beginning of January 1812, he capitulated with 18,000 soldiers, 23 general officers, and between 300 and 400 guns. Again, a loud noise was made by our opposition. "I believe," observed Lord Wellington at the time, "there is no man who knows the state of affairs in that province, and has read Suchet's account of his action with Blake on the 25th of October, who does not believe, that if Blake had not fought that action Valencia would have been safe. Are the English ministers and generals responsible for the blunders of Blake?"†

Unfortunately, during this year, 1811, the French had obtained great successes against the unassisted Spaniards on the distant eastern coast. Under the butcher, Suchet, they took Tarragona by storm, and committed a massacre on the unarmed population, without regard to age or sex. Still the brave Catalonians continued undismayed and firm in their resistance; and in the course of the ensuing year they received the assistance of a powerful armament. On that eastern coast the loss of the French had been immense; and, while they had been capturing towns and fortresses in Catalonia, the brave Baron d'Eroles, with a flying column, passed the Pyrenees into France, swept a good part of Gascony, and returned back to his own mountains with corn, cattle, and a good round contribution in money.

In the south the French vainly pressed their blockade of Cadiz. Ballasteros, supported by Gibraltar and the mountains of Ronda, kept the field with about 8,000 partisans, harassing the French with dreadful long marches and frequent skirmishes, baffling and cutting up a good part of the pursuing column of Godinot, and causing that French general so much mortification, that he went crazy, and shot himself.

* 'Dispatches,' vol. vii. p. 392. † Id. vol. viii. p. 520.

BOOK III.

Campaign of 1812.—Lord Wellington, from his head-quarters at Frenada, had been preparing the means of recapturing the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo. These cares had occupied him ever since he retired before Soult in the preceding autumn. Great things were done secretly and without any noise. Under the appearance of repairing and fortifying Almeida, he had collected there a battering train, and abundant stores. A portable bridge on trestles was also constructed in the same place. He also effected the formation of a commissariat waggon-train, with several hundred waggons constructed for the purpose, in order to supersede the rude carts of Portuguese construction which had been hitherto used as a means of transport for the army, but which would have often proved quite ineffectual without the assistance of a large body of Spanish mules and muleteers, which followed all the movements of the divisions of the British army. By the exertions of the engineer officers, the river Douro had been rendered navigable as far as the confluence of the Agueda; that is to say, forty miles higher than boats had ever before ascended it. All this was done with so little outward bustle and show, that Marmont does not seem to have anticipated any attack upon Ciudad Rodrigo, at least for the remainder of the winter. The French marshal had placed his army, the "Army of Portugal," in extensive cantonments about Placencia and Talavera, towards the Tagus, and had detached part of it eastward towards La Mancha, and two divisions to the north, to occupy the Asturias. Suddenly Lord Wellington, on the 6th of January, moved his head-quarters forward to Gallegos, and on the 8th part of the army crossed the Agueda, and immediately invested Ciudad Rodrigo.*

That very night an external redoubt, on a hill, called the Great Teson, was stormed by a party of our light division; by the 15th two strongly fortified convents outside the walls were carried by assault, our second parallel was completed, and fresh batteries were established. Two practicable breaches were made on the 19th, and that very evening orders were given to storm the place. No time was to be lost, for Marmont was advancing to relieve the garrison. The assault was made by two breaches and by the gate of St. Jago, and in less than half an hour the Allies were in

* A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life.'

possession of, and formed on the ramparts; and then the French garrison surrendered.* But the fighting had been awful, and an accident had swelled our great loss, General Mackinnon and many of his men having been blown up by the explosion of a magazine on the ramparts. General Craufurd, the gallant commander of the light division, was mortally wounded, and soon died; General Vandeleur and Colonel Colborne were wounded less seriously, as was also Major G. Napier, who led one of the storming parties, and who was not hit for the first time. The total loss of the British and Portuguese amounted to about 1,000 killed and wounded. The loss of the garrison was about the same, besides 1,700 prisoners. More than 300 pieces of cannon, a battering train complete, an armoury of small arms, a well-stocked arsenal, and military stores of all descriptions, were found in the place. Marshal Marmont had collected 60,000 men, and had advanced as far as Salamanca, nothing doubting of success; when, to his astonishment and dismay, he learned that the British flag was flying on the walls, that the trenches were filled in, and the breaches already in a defensible state.

The Spanish Cortes assembled at Cadiz passed unanimously a vote of thanks to his lordship, and conferred on him the title of Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo. In England he was raised to the dignity of an earl of the United Kingdom, and Parliament, in addition to a vote of thanks to him and his brave army, annexed to the title an annuity of 2,000*l.* In the debate in the Lower House, when the grant was proposed, Mr. Canning stated that a revenue of 5,000*l.* a year had been granted to Lord Wellington by the Portuguese government when they conferred upon him the title of Conde de Vimeira; that as Captain-General of Spain, 5,000*l.* a year had been offered him, and 7,000*l.* as Marshal in the Portuguese service, all of which he had declined, saying, "he would receive nothing from Spain and Portugal in their present state; he had only done his duty to his country, and to his country alone he would look for reward."†

Marshal Marmont retired again to Valladolid, his troops exhausted by forced marches which had no result, and himself unable to comprehend what next objects his dangerous adversary might have in view.

His lordship's first object of all was to take Badajoz before Marmont and Soult could unite for its defence. Having

* Letter to Lord Liverpool, 'Dispatches,' vol. viii. p. 549.
† 'Parliamentary Register.' 'Annual Register for 1812.'

repaired the works of Ciudad Rodrigo, and handed over the command of the place to a Spanish general on the 5th of March, he, on the afternoon of the same day, began to move to the south, leaving one division of his army on the Agueda. Again his preparations were carried on with all possible secrecy. The artillery for the siege was embarked at Lisbon for a fictitious destination, then transshipped at sea into small craft, in which it was conveyed up the Setubal river to Alcacer do Sol, and thence by land across the Alemtejo to the banks of the Guadiana. In this manner fifty-two heavy guns and twenty-four pounder howitzers, and an enormous quantity of powder, shot, and shell, were got up to Badajoz before the French knew anything about it. But the exertions and anxieties all this had cost Lord Wellington, had nearly broken up even his iron constitution.

On the 16th March our army crossed the Guadiana, and Badajoz was immediately invested, while several of our divisions advanced to Llerena and Merida to cover the siege.

When Lord Wellington thus sat down before Badajoz, its garrison consisted of 5,000 effective men, under the command of a most distinguished engineer, Phillipon, who had already defended the fortress with success, and who had been labouring for many months to increase its strength and to provide means of destruction for its assailants. More guns had been mounted, more retrenchments made, more covered ways established, more shafts sunk, and more mines formed; the place had been well provisioned and nearly all the Spanish inhabitants had been expelled from it. Such was the condition of Badajoz when, limited both in time and means Lord Wellington determined to attack it. Although his battering train was respectable, he was unprepared to undertake a slow formal siege. Mortars he had none—his miners were few and inexperienced—and if his operations were delayed, an advance of the French armies, or even stormy weather, must certainly interrupt the investment.*

While getting ready for his first assault on the outworks, his lordship's attention was distracted and his spirit vexed by intelligence from the south. He received a letter from Don Carlos d'España stating that Ciudad Rodrigo was provisioned for only twenty-three days, that the garrison had no money, that the repairs of the works could not be completed unless his lordship sent back some English workmen, and, finally, that if Marmont should only establish a single division between the Coa and the Agueda, that place,

* Maxwell, 'Life of the Duke,' vol. ii. p. 449.

whose reduction had cost so much British blood and treasure, must assuredly pass again into the hands of the French. Lord Wellington, who had reduced his own magazines to provision Ciudad Rodrigo, and who had almost emptied his military chest by leaving 12,000 dollars to repair the works, was justly incensed; and he wrote to the incapable Don,—"The report which you make of Ciudad Rodrigo distresses me much. I had hoped that when, by the labour of the British and Portuguese troops, and at the expense of the British Government, I had, in concert with General Castaños, improved and repaired the works of Ciudad Rodrigo, so that at all events the place was made secure from a *coup-de-main*, and had left money in order to complete the execution of what our troops had not time to complete, I should not have been told by your Excellency that, for want of the assistance of fifteen or twenty British soldiers, who are artificers, and whose services are required for other objects essential to the cause of Spain, the whole business is at a stand. Is it possible that your Excellency can be in earnest? Is it possible that Castile cannot furnish fifteen or twenty stone-cutters, masons, and carpenters for the repair of this important post? How have all the great works been performed which we see in your country?

"But your Excellency's letter suggests this melancholy reflection that everything, as well of a military as of a laborious nature, must be performed by British soldiers. . . . In writing this letter to your Excellency, I do not mean to make any reproach. I wish only to place upon record the facts as they have occurred, and to show to your country, and to my country and to the world, that if this important place should fall, or if I should be obliged to abandon plans important to Spain, in order to go to its relief, the fault is not mine."*

Five days after writing this letter, on the 25th of March, his lordship ordered an attack to be made on the Picurina, an advanced post, separated from Badajoz by the small river Rivillas. That post was bravely carried by storm; and, on the 26th, two breaching batteries opened a heavy fire on the town, in the midst of rainy, deplorable weather.

In the mean time, Soult was collecting his disposable force at Seville for the relief of the place, and Marmont, in order to effect a diversion, entered Portugal by Sabugal and Penamacor, and ravaged the country east of the Estrella. This

* Dated Camp before Badajoz, 20th March 1812.—'Dispatches,' vol. viii. p. 668.

compelled Lord Wellington to accelerate the operations of the siege. On the 6th of April, three breaches having become practicable, orders were given for the assault in the evening. The various divisions passed the glacis under a tremendous fire from the garrison, which greatly thinned their ranks; they descended into the ditch, and ascended the breaches, but here they found obstacles which appeared insuperable. Planks studded with iron spike-like harrows, and chevaux-de-frize formed of sword-blades, effectually stopped the way, and the ramparts and neighbouring buildings were occupied by light infantry, which showered their volleys upon the assailants. Shells, hand-grenades, every kind of burning composition, and missiles of every sort, were hurled at them. At last (about the hour of midnight), Lord Wellington ordered them to withdraw, just as a report came that General Picton's division had taken the castle by escalade, and soon after General Walker's brigade also entered the town by escalade on the side of the Olivença gate. The other divisions then formed again for the attack of the breaches, when all resistance ceased. The French governor, Philippon, with a few hundred men, escaped across the Guadiana to Fort San Christoval, where he surrendered the following morning. Many excesses and outrages were committed by the soldiers, until severe measures on the part of Lord Wellington restored order. The prisoners, however, were spared.

"Never," says Colonel Jones,—"probably never since the discovery of gunpowder, were men more seriously exposed to its action."* The loss of the allies had been dreadful: including the Portuguese, 72 officers and 963 men were killed, and 306 officers and 3,480 men wounded. Covered as they were, the French lost from 1,200 to 1,500 men during the siege and in the assault. Philippon, in surrendering with the survivors of the garrison, gave up from 3,000 to 4,000 prisoners, Spaniards, Portuguese, and English, who had been collected in Badajoz as a safe depôt. Writing to Colonel Torrens, the day after this dearly-bought triumph, his lordship said,—"Our loss has indeed been very great; but I send you a letter to Lord Liverpool which accounts for it. The truth is, that, equipped as we are, the British army is not capable of carrying on a long siege." This letter to the Earl of Liverpool has not been found; but from documents in the Ordnance-office, and from other sources, it appears that it recommended the

* 'Hist. of Sieges.'

immediate formation of a corps of sappers and miners; the want of such an establishment with the army being a chief cause of the great loss of lives in our sieges.* Our military historian has ably vindicated these sieges, showing the relation they had with other transactions, and with numerous and remote considerations:—"Many of Lord Wellington's proceedings," he observes, "might be called rash, and others timid and slow, if taken separately; yet when viewed as parts of a great plan for delivering the whole Peninsula, they will be found discreet or daring, as the circumstances warranted: nor is there any portion of his campaigns that requires this wide-based consideration more than his early sieges; which, being instituted contrary to the rules of art, and unsuccessful, or, when successful, attended with a mournful slaughter, have given occasion for questioning his great military qualities, which were, however, then most signally displayed."†

It was not until daybreak on the 7th of April, that his lordship was completely master of Badajoz. On the 8th, Soult collected his army at Villafranca, between Llerena and Merida, at a short distance from Badajoz; but hearing of the fall of that place, on the morning of the 9th, long before daylight, he began to retreat once more to Seville. Again the French were warmly pursued by the British cavalry, who cut up Soult's rear-guard at Villa Garcia.‡

By the 13th, Wellington was again in motion with the main body of his army, to drive Marmont out of Beira, and to make sure of Ciudad Rodrigo, which was blockaded by one of the marshal's divisions, and was certainly not safe with its Spanish garrison. On learning that he was in motion, Marmont withdrew with all possible speed into Spain, and again retreated to Salamanca. His lordship's head-quarters were again between the Coa and the Agueda, at Fuente Guinaldo, where they remained till the middle of June, nothing of importance occurring in that quarter during the interval. But Wellington had left General Hill with a good force in the south, and Hill, by a happy combination of rapidity, daring, and skill, attacked and carried by brilliant *coups-de-main* the strong forts the French had erected at Almaraz on the Tagus to protect a bridge of boats, which secured the communications between their armies of the north and south. By this operation Marmont was cut off

* See Note by Colonel Gurwood in 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ix.
† W. Napier, 'Hist. of the War in the Peninsula.'
‡ 'Dispatches,' vol. ix.

from Soult, and Soult from Marmont. Moreover, Hill's rapid movements in Estremadura carried consternation among the French in Andalusia, where nothing could be done against Cadiz, and where Marshal Victor had been previously foiled by Colonel Skerrett, and a very weak garrison thrown into the old Moresque fortress of Tarifa on the Straits of Gibraltar.

On the 13th of June, Wellington, having completed his preparations for an advance into Spain, broke up from his cantonments with about 40,000 men, leaving General Hill on the Tagus, near Almaraz, with about 12,000 more. On the 17th, he appeared before Salamanca, to the surprise of Marmont, who retired on his approach, leaving about 800 French in some forts, constructed on the ruins of convents, which commanded the only bridge which crossed the river Tormes into the town. The allied army forded the river and entered Salamanca, to the great joy of its inhabitants, who had been scandalously treated by the enemy. His lordship himself wrote,—"They have now been suffering for more than three years, during which time the French, among other acts of violence and oppression, have destroyed thirteen out of twenty-five convents, and twenty-two of twenty-five colleges, which existed in this celebrated seat of learning."* The convent forts, which were found to be of great strength, were immediately invested by General Clinton's division: Marmont retired to Toro on the Douro, and the British advance took up a position at San Christoval, a few miles in front of Salamanca. In a rash attempt to carry the forts by escalade, Major-general Bowes was slain, and 120 men were killed or wounded. On the 20th, Marmont, wheeling round, came in front of our position at San Christoval, and made a demonstration with his cavalry, which brought on a skirmish, but nothing more. The French marshal remained in our front all that night and all the next day, and on the following night established a post on our right flank, the possession of which would have deprived Wellington of an advantage which might eventually be of importance. Accordingly, on the following morning, the 22nd, that post was attacked by the hero of Barrosa, General Sir Thomas Graham, who drove the French from the ground immediately with some loss. "Our troops conducted themselves remarkably well in this affair, which took place in the view of every man of both armies."† Marmont retired during that night; and on the following evening he posted his

* 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. p. 239. † Id. vol. ix.

army with its right on some heights, its centre at Aldea Rubia, and its left on the Tormes. There was no mistaking his intention,—he wanted to communicate with and aid the garrisons in the convent forts at Salamanca, by the left bank of the Tormes. Wellington changed his front, and extended his troops so as to cover Salamanca completely, retaining the power of crossing and recrossing the Tormes, and of concentrating his army on any one point at a short notice. More than once Marmont made a false move, and exposed himself to attack; but, for the present, his adversary did not think it advisable to avail himself of his opportunities. Every effort that Marmont could make for the relief of the forts was completely baffled; those forts had all surrendered or been taken by the 27th; and thereupon the marshal retreated once more. In the beginning of July, Marmont was in a strong position on the northern bank of the Douro, and Wellington in lines on the southern bank of that river, the British and Portuguese facing the French. Marmont, who is taxed with being rather too fond of displaying his skill in directing the movements of large masses of men, changed front repeatedly, marched and countermarched, and perplexed his own people far more than his able opponent by numerous and complicated manœuvres. In the interval, the French marshal was reinforced by Bonnet's division, which had marched from the Asturias, not without having been harassed by the guerillas. On the 11th of July, Marmont threw two divisions across the Douro at Toro, when Wellington moved his army to the left to concentrate it on the Guareña, an affluent of the Douro. On the same night, the two French divisions recrossed the Douro where they had crossed it in the morning, and then Marmont, with his whole army, ascended the northern bank of the river to Tordesillas. Here he again crossed over to the southern bank, and thence, making a forced march, assembled at Nava del Rey on the 17th. On the 18th, he attempted to cut off Wellington's right wing; but his troops were repulsed by the charges of the British and Hanoverian cavalry, and the smart advance of the British and Portuguese light infantry. By his manœuvres, however, Marmont had now succeeded in re-establishing his communications with Joseph Buonaparte and the army of the centre, which was advancing from Madrid to join him.

The two armies of Marmont and Wellington were now in line on the opposite banks of the narrow Guareña. But on the 20th, the French marshal crossed that stream on

Wellington's right, and advanced towards the Tormes, in the design of cutting off his communications with Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo. This must not be! Wellington's columns were in motion as soon as Marmont's, and during part of that day's march, the two hostile armies moved towards the Tormes in parallel lines, and within half cannon-shot of each other. This striking spectacle has been described by several British officers who were eye-witnesses.

"A sight more glorious, and more solemn, war does not often present. Ninety thousand combatants marched side by side, as it were, without collision, each host admiring the array of its opponent, all eyes eager in their gaze, and all ears attent for the signal sound of battle." *

"Nothing intervened to obstruct a view of the columns of enemies that thus continued to pursue their course without the least obstacle to prevent their coming into instantaneous contact; for the slightest divergement from either line of march towards the other, would have brought them within musketry distance. I have always considered this day's march as a very extraordinary scene, only to have occurred from the generals opposed commanding highly disciplined armies, each at the same time pursuing an object from which he was not to be for an instant abstracted by minor circumstances; the French marshal pressing forward to arrive first on the Tormes, Lord Wellington following his motions, and steadily adhering to the defensive, until substantial reasons appeared to demand the adoption of a more decided conduct....No spectator would have imagined that the two immense moving columns that filled the whole country, and seemed interminable—being lost to the eye in dust and distance—composed two armies, animated with earnest desires for the destruction of each other, but who, although possessed of numerous artillery and cavalry, were persevering on their way, as if by mutual consent refraining from serious hostility, until arrived at the arena destined for the great trial, to which either was now advancing with confidence and without interruption."†

Wellington's determinations were to recross the Tormes, if Marmont should cross it; to cover Salamanca as long as he could; not to give up his communication with Ciudad Rodrigo; and, above all, not to fight a battle unless under very advantageous circumstances, or under absolute neces-

* M. Sherer, 'Military Memoirs.'

† Colonel Leith Hay, 'Narrative of the Peninsular War.'

sity. He saw that there was not much to be got, or to be hoped for, by advancing into Castile. The wheat harvest had not yet been reaped; and even if he had had plenty of money—which he had not—he could not have procured anything from the country; for he could not follow the example of the French, who were laying waste whole districts in order to procure a scanty subsistence of unripe wheat.* To the British general the keeping open of communications was almost everything; while to the French general, who had not to look to legitimate or regular supplies, it was next to nothing. Both Soult and Massena had contrived to live in Portugal for months when all their communications had been cut off; and now Marmont, for a certain time, could do as much in Spain. Even at this moment he had been surrounded for six weeks, and scarcely even a letter had reached him. "But," said Wellington, "the system of organized rapine and plunder, and the extraordinary discipline so long established in the French armies, enable it to subsist at the expense of the total ruin of the country in which it has been placed, and I am not certain that Marshal Marmont has not now at his command a greater quantity of provisions and supplies of every description than we have. Any movement upon his flank, therefore, would only tend to augment the embarrassments of our own situation, while it would have no effect whatever upon that of the enemy..... I have invariably been of opinion that, unless forced to fight a battle, it is better that one should not be fought by the Allied Army, unless under such favourable circumstances as that there would be reason to hope that the Allied Army would be able to maintain the field, while that of the enemy should not. Your lordship will have seen by the returns of the two armies that we have no superiority of numbers even over that single army immediately opposed to us; indeed, I believe that the French army is of the two the strongest, and it is certainly equipped with a profusion of artillery double ours in number, and of larger calibres. It cannot therefore be attacked in a chosen position without considerable loss on our side. To this circumstance add, that I am quite certain that Marmont's army is to be joined by the king's, which will be 10,000 or 12,000 men, with a large proportion of cavalry, and that troops are still expected from the army of the north, and some are ordered from that of the south; and it

* 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. Letter from Lord Wellington to Earl Bathurst, dated near Salamanca, 21st July.

will be seen that I ought to consider it almost impossible to remain in Castile after an action, the circumstances of which should not have been so advantageous as to have left the Allied Army in a situation of comparative strength, while that of the enemy should have been much weakened. I have therefore determined to cross the Tormes if the enemy should; to cover Salamanca as long as I can, and, above all, not to give up our communication with Ciudad Rodrigo; and not to fight an action unless under very advantageous circumstances, or it should become absolutely necessary." *

By advancing even the short distance he had done into Spain, his lordship had compelled Marmont to abandon the Asturias, by calling to his aid Bonnet and every French soldier that was there; he had afforded encouragement to the Spaniards, and an opportunity of recruiting fresh armies; he had diverted the attention of the French from several remaining provinces of the kingdom, and had compelled them to leave Madrid in a very weak state. On commencing his forward movement, he was justified in calculating upon a chance of out-manœuvring the French marshal; and any brilliant success on his part was almost sure to compel Soult to raise the blockade of Cadiz, if not to evacuate the whole of Andalusia. Moreover, his lordship had been promised the active co-operation of an Anglo-Sicilian force of from 12,000 to 15,000 men, which was to land on the eastern coast of Spain, and which might be expected to draw to that distant quarter some of the French divisions that were now near to him.

On the 21st of July, both Marmont and Wellington crossed the Tormes, the Allied Army passing by the bridge of Salamanca, the French by the fords higher up the river. Night closed in before this passage was completed; and our troops had scarcely reached their bivouacs, ere a tremendous thunderstorm commenced. The rain fell in torrents, the most vivid flashes of lightning were succeeded by instantaneous peals of thunder. A more violent crash of the elements had seldom been witnessed. General Le Marchant's brigade of cavalry had halted; the men, dismounted, were seated or lying on the ground, holding their horses, which, alarmed by the storm, snorted and started with such violence that many of them broke loose, and galloped across the country in all directions. "This dispersion, and the frightened horses, passing without riders in a state of wildness, added to the

* 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. p. 296-8.

awful effect of the tempest; nor was the situation in which we were otherwise placed one of great brightness."*

In the course of this stormy night, Lord Wellington received certain intelligence that General Clausel had arrived at Pollos on the 20th, with the cavalry and horse-artillery of the army of the north; and his lordship was quite certain that these troops could join Marmont on the 22nd or 23rd at latest. There was, therefore, no time to be lost; and his lordship determined that, if circumstance or some lucky chance should not permit him to attack Marmont on the morrow (the 22nd), he would move at once towards Ciudad Rodrigo, as the great difference in the numbers of cavalry might render a march of manœuvre, such as he had been making for the last four or five days, very difficult, and its result doubtful.†

The storm died away in the night. The rising sun of the 22nd shone upon the two hostile armies in their near positions, and upon many a brave soldier who was not to see the setting of that sun. The British general had placed his troops in a position the left of which rested on the Tormes, below the ford of Santa Martha, and the right on one of two steep hills which rise abruptly in the midst of the plain, and from their similarity and contiguity are called Dos Arapiles. The French marshal nearly faced him, occupying the heights of Lapeña, holding the village of Calvarasso de Ariba, and inclining his left towards the roads leading to Ciudad Rodrigo. Both armies were still very near the city of Salamanca, both were masters of their respective lines, and free to accept or decline battle, as their commanders might choose. Marmont was already at the head of 47,000 good troops, outnumbering the allies by nearly 5,000 men; and he had this additional advantage—a good part of his position was covered and concealed by thick wood. His experimental manœuvres to get between the allies and their Ciudad Rodrigo route, gave Wellington the chance he was looking for, and brought on the battle.

Soon after dawn skirmishing began, and this was followed by the advance of a strong French detachment, which seized the more distant and stronger of the two hills, called Arapiles. The right of Wellington's position being thus rather open to annoyance, his lordship instantly extended it *en potence* to the heights behind the village of Arapiles, and occupied that hamlet with light infantry. Still per-

* Colonel Leith Hay, 'Narrative.'

† Dispatch to Earl Bathurst, dated July 24th.

severing in his attempt to turn our right, or make Wellington believe he might turn it, and get on the Ciudad Rodrigo road, Marmont, after a variety of evolutions and manœuvres, in which many hours were consumed, began to extend his troops considerably to his left. This manœuvre—accompanied with a great display, with a noisy cannonade, and a cloudy cover of skirmishers—was performed by the marshal upon some heights, not above have half a mile in front of the British. No sooner was Wellington fully aware of the error which Marmont was committing by over-extending and weakening his line, than he uttered a joyful exclamation, and made dispositions for the attack. It was now two o'clock in the afternoon. Ignorant of our great Captain's intention, the French were, at this moment, engaged in a partial combat with a detachment of our guards, which held the village of Arapiles, and resisted all efforts to dislodge them. Wellington had disposed his divisions so as to turn the French left, and to attack them in front at the same time.

Suddenly our 3rd division, under General Packenham, supported by two brigades of artillery and several squadrons under d'Urban, rapidly and steadily ascended the ridge occupied by Marmont's extreme left, formed line across the flank of the French, and then moved on towards the centre of the enemy, driving everything before him. "Wherever the French attempted to make a stand, they were charged with the bayonet; the cavalry at the same time charged the enemy in front, and the whole left wing of the French made a disorderly retreat towards their right, leaving many killed and wounded behind, and about 3,000 prisoners. Meantime the 4th and 5th divisions, after a very severe struggle, succeeded in driving in the centre of the enemy, whose right, however, remained unbroken, when General Clausel, who, having joined the French army that day, succeeded to the command in consequence of Marshal Marmont being wounded, withdrew his troops with great skill, and formed them in a new position, nearly at right angles with the original one. His cavalry was numerous, and his artillery formidable. Lord Wellington directed a fresh attack, and the 6th division, ascending to the enemy's position, under a sweeping fire of artillery and musketry, gained the level ground, when they charged with the bayonet, and the 4th division coming up at the same time, the French abandoned the ground in great confusion, retreating towards Alba de Tormes, followed closely by the

British, till night stopped the pursuit, which was renewed by the cavalry on the morning of the 23rd. The cavalry came up with the French rear near La Serna, when three battalions surrendered, being forsaken by their own cavalry. Clausel retired by Peñaranda to Arevalo, whence he took the direction of Valladolid. The loss of the French was very severe; three generals killed, four wounded; one general, six field-officers, 130 officers of inferior rank, and between 6,000 and 7,000 men taken prisoners, besides two eagles. Their total loss in killed and wounded could not be ascertained. The Allies had 694 killed, and 4,270 wounded; but the proportion of officers was very great. General Le Marchant was killed, and Generals Beresford, Leith, Cole, Cotton, and Spry were wounded. The consequences of the victory of Salamanca were considerable; but they would have been much greater if the promised Anglo-Sicilian expedition had been sent in time, and in sufficient numbers, to the eastern coast of Spain. The French would then, probably, have been obliged to withdraw to the Ebro. But the expedition arrived late, and then consisted only of 6,000 men, and effected little or nothing. Yet the ultimate though not immediate results of the victory of Salamanca were great, and a French historian, generally very warm in the cause of Napoleon, does not hesitate to attribute to the military and political consequences of that battle the ultimate loss of Spain by the French. — (Thibaudeau, *Histoire de l'Empire*, ch. 83.) Among the political consequences must be reckoned the obliteration of any tendency that there might have been in the minds of some of the influential men in Spain, and even in the Cortes, to give up the English alliance, and make their peace with King Joseph, on condition of his acknowledging the constitution proclaimed by the Cortes assembled at Cadiz in March of that year. The author, just quoted, says, 'We are assured that a negociation to that effect had been entered into, which the battle of Salamanca broke off for ever.' What chance there would have been afterwards of Napoleon observing and fulfilling any agreement of the kind alluded to, those who have studied his character and his course of policy can easily guess. But the Spaniards, at least those who had something to lose, were then in the condition of drowning men catching at straws."*

* A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life.' For Lord Wellington's own clear, modest, admirable account of the battle of Salamanca, and of the remarkable movements by which it was preceded and followed, see 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. from p. 294 to p. 328.

During their flight on the 23rd, the day after the great battle, the enemy were joined by the cavalry and artillery of the army of the north, which, through Wellington's prompt decision, had joined too late to be of much use. On the night of the 23rd, Clausel's head-quarters were at Flores de Avila, not less than ten leagues from the field of Salamanca. Headlong as was their flight, the French were followed very closely the whole way from Salamanca to Valladolid. But for our numerical inferiority in cavalry, Marmont's so-called Army of Portugal would have been utterly destroyed on this retreat; as it would have been on the field of battle, but for the setting-in of night. "They all agree," wrote Lord Wellington, "that if we had had an hour more of daylight at Salamanca, the whole army would have been in our hands. General Clausel, who is wounded, now commands it. The only apprehension I have, is, that when the army of Portugal and the army of the king shall have joined, they will be too strong for us in cavalry. *I am convinced that their infantry will make no stand.*"*

Marshal Soult would not yet give up his Cadiz blockade. Might not the advance of the allies to Madrid oblige him? His adversary determined to try.

Having crossed the Douro, Lord Wellington reached Valladolid on the 30th of July, Clausel clearing out of that city on his lordship's approach, and continuing his retreat towards Burgos, with almost incredible speed. The British general entered Valladolid amidst the rejoicing of the people, and there captured seventeen pieces of artillery, considerable stores, and 800 sick and wounded French, left behind by Clausel. The priests would have made processions and have sung *Te Deum*, as had been done at Salamanca, but Wellington had no time to spare. Joseph Buonaparte, with all the troops he could muster at Madrid and pick up on his road (in all, he had about 20,000 men), had marched from the Escurial on the 21st of July, the day before the battle of Salamanca, to join Marmont. On arriving at Arevalo, Joseph, to his consternation, heard of Marmont's defeat; and thereupon he changed his route, striking off by the right to Segovia to attempt a diversion in favour of Clausel and the retreating army. Lord Wellington, therefore, quitted Valladolid the day after he arrived at it, recrossed the Douro, and marched against Joseph, leaving

* Letter to Earl Bathurst, dated July 28th.—'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ix.

a force on the Douro to watch Clausel. His lordship's movements were again delayed for want of supplies and want of money. He wrote to the noble Secretary at War —"We are absolutely bankrupt. The troops are now five months in arrears instead of being one in advance. The staff have not been paid since February, the muleteers not since June, 1811."* But by great exertions some provisions were brought up, and on the 6th of August he was enabled to point the heads of his columns towards Madrid. Joseph made some eccentric movements, then fell back upon S. Ildefonso, and then continued his retreat towards the capital. On the 9th, Wellington had his head-quarters at S. Ildefonso; and on the 10th and 11th, his victorious troops, defiling by the passes of Guadarama and Naval Serrada, crossed the mountains and descended into the plain on which Madrid is situated. Joseph Buonaparte had done little more than flit through that city; followed by the French intruders and their Spanish partisans, he was now flying to the left bank of the Tagus.

On the 12th of August, Wellington entered Madrid, and was received with enthusiastic acclamations. He rode instantly through the town to reconnoitre the defences of the Retiro palace, where Joseph had left a weak garrison, which surrendered on the morning of the 14th, and put into his lordship's possession 20,000 stand of arms, 180 pieces of ordnance, and military stores of every description.

Now all was joy in Madrid. I quote from an officer who was present. "The entire population poured into the streets and squares; every tongue was loosened; on all sides were heard the accents of joy; laurels and flowers decorated the gay scene; tapestry and carpets were hung from the balconies; holiday dresses were put on; holiday greetings were given; and the holiday smiles of men, women, and children repaid the army for all its toils. But Wellington was more especially the object of their praise and honour: wherever he appeared, cries rent the air of 'Long live the Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo!'—'Long live Wellington!' Green boughs, and flowers, and shawls were strewn before his horse's feet. Here it should be recorded, that when, upon the 22nd of August, the new council waited upon him with all the ceremonies of state to offer to him a congratulatory address as Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, conceived in those glowing terms which are fitting towards a deliverer, Wellington replied

* Letter to Earl Bathurst, dated 18th of July 1812.—Dispatches, vol. ix.

with simple dignity and unaffected modesty; nor did he notice in his reply their proud and swelling enumeration of his great successes, further than by one line:—'The events of war are in the hands of Providence.' In this spirit he looked back upon his past achievements; in this spirit he contemplated the severe trials and arduous duties which coming events might yet impose on him."*

The municipal authorities gave a grand bull-fight in his honour, and when he appeared in the amphitheatre on the seat which had been usually occupied by royalty, the air rang with the prolonged shouts of more than 12,000 spectators. "He could not walk abroad by daylight, because of the pressure of the multitudes who gathered round him; even in the dark, when he went into the Prado, though he and his suite were dressed in blue greatcoats in hopes of escaping notice, they were generally recognised and followed by crowds, the women pressing to shake hands, and some even to embrace them."†

In consequence of Wellington's bold advance to Madrid, Marshal Soult raised the blockade of Cadiz, destroying the works which the French had constructed with an enormous expenditure of money and labour, and abandoning the whole of Western Andalusia, he concentrated his forces in Granada. But the French abandoned these famed lines with so much haste, that they could not destroy the half of their stores and other materials; thirty gun-boats and some hundred of pieces of ordnance, including some cannon of portentous length, which had been cast expressly for the siege of Cadiz, fell into the hands of the Spaniards, and were found to be in good part but little injured.‡ Soult's retreat was very disastrous; his rear-guard was attacked by an allied force of English and Spanish, who issued from Cadiz, drove it from San Lucar, and took Seville by assault, although eight French battalions had been left to maintain that city. In his march to Granada by Cremona, Soult suffered further loss from excessive heat, fatigue, scarcity, and the occasional attacks of armed bands of peasantry. At Granada, Soult concentrated his army. General Hill at the same time advanced from the banks of the Guadiana to the Tagus, connecting his operations with those of the main body of Lord

* Captain M. Sherer, 'Military Memoir.' † Southey.

‡ In the summer of 1815, just after we had received authentic intelligence of the Duke's crowning victory at Waterloo, I saw some of these fine, long French guns lying on the sands at the edge of Cadiz Bay. For three years the lazy Spaniards had left them there to spoil.

Wellington's army. On his approach, King Joseph abandoned Toledo, and fell back to Almanza, in Murcia, to keep himself in communication with Soult and Suchet. A great part of southern and central Spain was thus freed from the French, who never after retook Seville. By the close of August, Hill occupied Toledo, Ypez, and Aranjuez, thus covering the right of the allied main army; and guarding all the roads which led from the south to Madrid.

The situation of Lord Wellington at Madrid was, however, critical. Clausel's army in the north had been largely reinforced, and Soult, and Suchet, and King Joseph, by forming a junction, might advance from the south, and thus the Allies would be attacked by a combined force nearly treble in number to their own. The Anglo-Sicilian expedition on the eastern coast was a disappointment and a failure; instead of 12,000 or 15,000 men, only 6,000 came from Sicily; of these a good part were unreliable foreign auxiliaries, and now the whole force was cooped up in Alicante, and could not effect any powerful diversion. There was no Spanish force of any magnitude upon which Lord Wellington could depend for field operations. The Gallician army under Santocildes, which was the most effective Spanish corps, after taking Astorga, had advanced towards Zamora, but was driven back by Clausel. Ballasteros, who commanded a Spanish force in Andalusia, refused to be directed by Lord Wellington, and O'Donnell had been defeated in Valencia by Suchet, and driven into Murcia. In Castile and at Madrid, Lord Wellington heard many expressions of good-will, but no active exertions were made in the common cause. The country was exhausted, the people appeared disheartened, and the British commander-in-chief could not realize at Madrid, upon drafts on the British treasury, a sum of money adequate to his most pressing wants.

Nothing was heard of General Castaños, who had promised to join his lordship soon after the battle of Salamanca. Before he had been twelve days in Madrid, Wellington wrote:—"I do not expect much from their exertions; notwithstanding all we have done for them. They cry *Viva*, and are very fond of us, and hate the French; but they are in general the most incapable of useful exertion of all the nations that I have known: the most vain, and at the same time the most ignorant, particularly of military affairs, and, above all, of military affairs in their own country." The constitution made by the Cortes at Cadiz had been proclaimed in Madrid, as in the other libe-

rated cities; a regency, restricted by parliamentary votes, had been formed; and the affairs of government were supposed to be conducted on constitutional principles; but it was not found that government appointments were made upon purer motives, or that better men were named than under the old absolutism of the Bourbon monarchs. His lordship repeatedly complained that the appointments to offices, and great situations and military commands were given to inefficient persons and to men without character. "What," said he, "can be done for this lost nation? As for raising men or supplies, or taking any one measure to enable them to carry on the war, that is out of the question. Indeed, there is nobody to excite them to exertion, or to take advantage of the enthusiasm of the people, or of their enmity against the French. Even the guerillas are getting quietly into the large towns, and amusing themselves, or collecting plunder of a better and more valuable description; and nobody looks forward to the exertions to be made, whether to improve or to secure our advantage.

"This is a faithful picture of the state of affairs, and though I still hope to be able to maintain our position in Castile, and even to improve our advantages, I shudder when I reflect upon the enormity of the task which I have undertaken, with inadequate powers myself to do anything, and without assistance of any kind from the Spaniards, or, I may say, from any individual of the Spanish nation.....

"I am apprehensive that all this will turn out but ill for the Spanish cause. If, from any cause, I should be overpowered, or should be obliged to retire, what will the world say? What will the people of England say? What will those in Spain say? That we had made a great effort, attended by some glorious circumstances; and that from January 1812 we had gained more advantages for the cause, and had acquired more extent of territory by our operations, than had ever been gained by any army in the same period of time against so powerful an enemy; but that, being unaided by the Spanish officers and troops, not from disinclination, but from inability, on account of the gross ignorance of the former and the want of discipline of the latter, and from the inefficiency of all the persons selected by the Government for great employment, we were at last overpowered, and compelled to withdraw within our own frontier.

"What will be Lord Castlereagh's reply to the next proposition for peace? Not that we will not treat if the government of Joseph is to be the guaranteed government; but

he will be too happy to avail himself of any opportunity of withdrawing with honour from a contest in which it will be manifest that, owing to the inability of those employed to carry it on on the part of the Spaniards, there is no prospect of military success. Thus, this great cause will be lost, and this nation will be enslaved for the want of men at their head capable of conducting them."*

To other annoyances at this crisis of the war to which his lordship was exposed, the following must be mentioned:—The Portuguese Government had an old money-claim upon the Spanish Government; and, instead of providing funds for the maintenance of their own troops, they made an arrangement to take provisions in lieu of cash; the Spaniards were to support the Portuguese troops; and, when their own armies were half-starved, they undertook to feed another! If the Portuguese army had been left to depend upon this precious bargain, it must have been disbanded. But Lord Wellington, with his habitual promptness and firmness, ordered the suspension of the subsidies which England was paying to Portugal, and this brought the regency at Lisbon to their senses.

In every sense, for Wellington to remain at Madrid was impracticable; he must either advance to the north against Clausel, or to the south against Soult, and he determined on the first of these movements, for the purpose of striking a blow at Clausel before the French in the south and east could advance to his support. Leaving two divisions at Madrid, he marched with the remainder, on the 1st of September, for Valladolid, which he entered on the 7th, and, continuing his march towards Burgos, was joined at Valencia by the Spanish army of Gallicia, which scarcely mustered 10,000 men, undisciplined and deficient in equipment. On the 19th, the Allied Army entered Burgos, and the French, under General Souham, who had assumed the command in the north, fell back to Briviesca, leaving 2,000 men, under General Dubreton, in the Castle of Burgos, strong by its position, which had been fortified with care.

The possession of that fort was necessary for the security of the Allied Army in its present advanced and exposed position, and Lord Wellington directed it to be invested forthwith, though he was ill furnished with siege-artillery. A horn-work on a hill, which commanded several of the works of the castle, was carried by assault. The fort itself

* Letter to the Right Honourable Henry Wellesley, dated Madrid, 23rd of August 1812.—'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ix. pp. 372-6.

was battered, but with little effect, and sapping was then resorted to. On the 29th, a breach being effected in the outer wall by the explosion of a mine, an attempt was made to storm it, but failed. Another breach was effected in like manner on the evening of the 4th of October, and being stormed with success, the besiegers were established within the exterior line of the works of the castle. The garrison made two sorties, by which they materially injured the works of the Allies, and occasioned them great loss. Want of ammunition greatly retarded the operations of the siege. A breach at last being effected, by mining, in the second line on the 18th, orders were given to storm it. A detachment of the King's German Legion carried the breach, and a detachment of the Guards succeeded in escalading the line; but the enemy brought such a fire upon them from the third line and from the body of the castle, and attacked them with numbers so superior before they could be supported, that they were obliged to retire with considerable loss. General Dubreton had made a brave stand and a skilful resistance, but no bravery or skill could have saved the castle in the face of so bold and persevering an enemy. But now the French army of the north advanced with evident intention to raise the siege; and at the same time Lord Wellington learned from General Hill that the armies of the south and centre, which, being united, mustered 70,000 strong, were advancing from Valencia towards the Tagus, and that the Spanish General Ballasteros had not assumed a position in La Mancha which the Spanish Government, at Lord Wellington's suggestion, had directed him to take, in order to intercept the enemy's movements. The British commander was therefore under the painful necessity of abandoning the siege of Burgos, and of effecting a retrograde movement in order to draw near to General Hill, who, at the approach of Soult, abandoned Madrid, and retired slowly towards Salamanca. On the 21st of October the siege of Burgos was raised, and Lord Wellington retired in good order to Valencia, and was joined by a brigade from England under Lord Dalhousie, which had landed at Coruña. The French, under Souham, repeatedly attacked the rear-guard of the Allies until they reached the Douro at Tudela, when Souham halted, waiting to be joined by Soult from the south. Lord Wellington continued his retreat to the Tormes, being joined on the 3rd of November by General Sir Rowland Hill.*

* A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke,' and 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. from p. 390 to p. 510.

After getting across the Douro, and effecting his junction with Hill, his lordship congratulated himself on his success. "I assure you," he wrote to the Secretary at War, "that, considering the numbers of the enemy (among whom is Caffarelli's infantry, as well as his cavalry), and considering the state of the Spanish troops, the great proportion of foreign troops in the divisions which I have with me, and their general weakness, and the weakness of our cavalry, I think I have escaped from the worst military situation I was ever in." *

On the 8th of November, the Allies took up their old position on the heights of San Christoval, in front of Salamanca. On the 10th, Souham and Soult joined their forces, which amounted to 75,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, whilst Lord Wellington's army did not exceed 48,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. On the 14th, the French crossed the Tormes in force near Lucinas. Lord Wellington took position at the Arapiles, being the ground of his former victory; but as the enemy, through his superiority of numbers, and especially of cavalry, was in motion to intercept his communications with Ciudad Rodrigo, he withdrew through Salamanca, and continued his retreat towards the Agueda. The French might have given battle at Salamanca —and did not. As he moved from the Arapiles, Wellington saw them still fortifying the position they had taken up— so cautious had they been rendered by his lordship's skill and successes, and by their own defeats and reverses.

Putting the Allied Army in march in three columns, and crossing the Zurguen, which Sir Edward Paget had guarded, and then turning and passing the enemy's left flank, his lordship encamped the night of the 15th on the Valmuza. On the following day, the 16th of November, the French followed his movements with immense masses of cavalry and a considerable body of infantry; but they did not attempt to press upon his rear. On the 17th, they took advantage of the ground to cannonade our light division, which formed the rear-guard, and was now commanded by General Alten, on its passage over the river, and caused it some loss. In the course of the same day, General Sir Edward Paget, who had ridden to the rear to discover the cause of some delay in the march of the 7th division of infantry, was surprised, when on the top of a hill, with a spy-glass in his hand, and was taken prisoner by some Italian cavalry which issued from a wood. I was well acquainted with the officer who

* Dispatch to Earl Bathurst, dated Rueda 31st October.—'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ix. p. 526.

had the principal share in this capture. It was Don Marc Antonio Colonna, son of the Prince of Stigliano, a branch of the most ancient and noble family of the Colonna, long settled in the kingdom of Naples. He discovered, with his glass, an English general officer on the top of a hill, and, galloping to the spot, surrounded the base of the hill. I have often heard him give a graphic and touching account of the behaviour of the stately and gallant veteran, who had already lost an arm, and was very short-sighted. Sir Edward, upon first seeing the dragoons, put spurs to his horse, and would have galloped down the hill, but Colonna cried out that it was surrounded, that escape was impossible, that the attempt might lead to destruction; and, as he closed upon him with several troopers, Sir Edward presented his sword and surrendered. Upon learning the capture, Lord Wellington wrote the following considerate, delicate, warm-hearted, and nobly characteristic letter :—

"Head-quarters, 19th Nov. 1812.

"My dear Paget,—

"I did not hear of your misfortune till more than an hour after it had occurred, nor was I certain of it till the enemy attacked our rear-guard, and the firing had continued for some time, and I found you were not on the field; and you will judge of my concern by the sense which I hope you feel I entertain of the cordial assistance which I received from you during the short time that you have been with us.

"I cannot account for your misfortune, excepting that you were alone, and could not see the approach of the enemy's cavalry.

"That which must now be done, is to endeavour to obtain your exchange.

"I have no French general officer in the Peninsula; but I beg you to make it known to the king and to the Duke of Dalmatia, that I will engage that any general officer they will name shall be sent from England to France in exchange for you. If you should find that there is any prospect of your being exchanged, I recommend to you to endeavour to prevail upon the king not to send you to France. It is not necessary to enter into the reason for giving you this advice. If the king or the Duke of Dalmatia* will not name an officer to be exchanged for you, the sooner you are sent to France the better.

"I send you some money—£200. I will take care of your friend Morley. You cannot conceive how much I

* Marshal Soult.

regret your loss. This is the second time I have been deprived of your assistance, at an early period after you had joined us, and I am almost afraid to wish to have you again; but God knows with what pleasure I shall hear of your being liberated, and shall see you with us.

"Believe me, &c.

(Signed) "WELLINGTON.

"Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir E. Paget, K.B.

P. S.—"Let me know your wishes on any subject, and they shall be carried into execution."*

On the 18th, the day after losing brave Paget, Lord Wellington, without let or hindrance, established his head-quarters at Ciudad Rodrigo, the French having kept at a cautious distance all that day. Soult, in fact, after he had crossed the Tormes, made no serious movement, being called upon by Joseph to send some troops into old Castile. "I believe, too," said his lordship, "that the enemy require repose as much, if not more, than we do; and that their immense numbers are rather embarrassing to them in a country already exhausted. But I am not quite certain that they do not propose to penetrate into Portugal this winter. I hope the enterprise will end fatally to them; but our troops will suffer a good deal if they are to have a winter campaign, and if the weather should continue as severe as it has been since the 15th of November." †

The main army of the British and Portuguese were now distributed in their old quarters within the frontiers of Portugal, their left resting at Lamego on the Douro, whilst General Hill's corps moved into Spanish Estremadura, into cantonments, near Coria, and towards the Tagus, placing strong posts at the passes of Baños and Bejar. The campaign of 1812 was terminated.

During the retreat from Burgos the Allied troops suffered much fatigue and privation; the weather was very inclement, the roads were deep and miry, the rivulets were all filled, and the rivers were greatly swelled, and some of them were breast high at the fords. Owing to the irreme-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. p. 556. A few days afterwards—busy as he was in getting his troops into cantonments and in restoring discipline—his lordship wrote a condoling and affectionate letter to the Honourable Berkeley Paget, the general's brother, and another letter to the French general, Maucune, thanking him for the kindness he had shown to his prisoner, and requesting to know what sums he had advanced to General Paget, so that he might repay them. See 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. pp. 564 and 585.

† Letter to the Earl of Liverpool. 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. p. 570.

diable difficulty of obtaining provisions in Spain, a great part of the army had neither bread nor biscuit, and the men had only a ration of lean tough beef, which they could not cook, but heated upon such smoky fires as they could make, and so ate it half raw. Many irregularities were committed by the soldiers, which Lord Wellington severely reprobated in a circular which he addressed to all commanding officers of divisions and brigades, dated Frenada, 28th of November 1812.

Throwing the blame where it was due, his lordship said, —"I have no hesitation in attributing these evils to the habitual inattention of the officers of regiments to their duty, as prescribed by the standing regulations of the service, and by the orders of this army.

"I am far from questioning the zeal, still less the gallantry and spirit, of the officers of the army; and I am quite certain that if their minds can be convinced of the necessity of minute and constant attention to understand, recollect, and carry into execution the orders which have been issued for the performance of their duty, and that the strict performance of this duty is necessary to enable the army to serve the country as it ought to be served, they will in future give their attention to these points.

"Unfortunately, the inexperience of the officers of the army has induced many to consider that the period during which an army is on service is one of relaxation from all rule, instead of being, as it is, the period during which, of all others, every rule for the regulation and control of the conduct of the soldier, for the inspection and care of his arms, ammunition, accoutrements, necessaries, and field equipments, and his horse and horse appointments; for the receipt, and issue, and care of his provisions; and the regulation of all that belongs to his food and the forage for his horse, must be most strictly attended to by the officers of his company or troop, if it is intended that an army, a British army in particular, shall be brought into the field of battle in a state of efficiency to meet the enemy on the day of trial.

"These are the points, then, to which I most earnestly entreat you to turn your attention, and the attention of the officers of the regiments under your command, Portuguese as well as English, during the period in which it may be in my power to leave the troops in their cantonments. The commanding officers of regiments must enforce the orders of the army regarding the constant inspection and superintendence of the officers over the conduct of the men of their

companies in their cantonments; and they must endeavour to inspire the non-commissioned officers with a sense of their situation and authority; and the non-commissioned officers must be forced to do their duty, by being constantly under the view and superintendence of the officers. By these means, the frequent and discreditable recourse to the authority of the provost, and to punishments by the sentence of courts-martial, will be prevented, and the soldiers will not dare to commit the offences and outrages of which there are too many complaints, when they well know that their officers and their non-commissioned officers have their eyes and attention turned towards them.

"The commanding officers of regiments must likewise enforce the orders of the army regarding the constant, real inspection of the soldier's arms, ammunition, accoutrements, and necessaries, in order to prevent at all times the shameful waste of ammunition, and the sale of that article, and of the soldier's necessaries. With this view both should be inspected daily.

"In regard to the food of the soldier, I have frequently observed and lamented in the late campaign, the facility and celerity with which the French soldiers cooked, in comparison with those of our army.

"The cause of this disadvantage is the same with that of every other description, the want of attention of the officers to the orders of the army; and the conduct of their men, and the consequent want of authority over their conduct. Certain men of each company should be appointed to cut and bring in wood, others to fetch water, and others to get the meat, &c., to be cooked; and it would soon be found that if this practice were daily enforced, and a particular hour for seeing the dinners, and for the men dining, named, as it ought to be, equally as for parade, that cooking would no longer require the inconvenient length of time which it has lately been found to take, and that the soldiers would not be exposed to the privation of their food at the moment at which the army may be engaged in operations with the enemy.

"You will, of course, give your attention to the field exercise and discipline of the troops. It is very desirable that the soldiers should not lose the habits of marching, and the division should march ten or twelve miles twice in each week, if the weather should permit, and the roads in the neighbourhood of the cantonments of the division should be dry.

"But I repeat that the great object of the attention of the general and field officers must be to get the captains and subalterns of the regiments to understand and perform the duties required from them, as the only mode by which the discipline and efficiency of the army can be restored and maintained during the next campaign.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"WELLINGTON."

To Officers commanding Divisions and Brigades.*

This severe lesson was certainly called for. Many of our officers—particularly in the cavalry regiments—were above their duty, or fancied that their duty consisted merely in bravely leading their men in battle, and that all details and superintendence might be left very well to old sergeants and sergeant-majors. This was not Wellington's notion; and we find his lordship frequently complaining that he had too many fine gentlemen; that the War-office sent him out too many thoughtless young men; that he wanted men who would do their work thoroughly, and not take amiss any detail of duty.

But, while he was thus rating his officers, he was himself severely rated in England: the opposition party had renewed their outcry, and people totally ignorant of the science and practice of war were criticising his late campaign, and dogmatically sitting in judgment on his wonderful retreat. He thus modestly and manfully explained what he had done, and took upon himself the responsibility of what he had been obliged to leave undone:—

"From what I see in the newspapers," he wrote to Lord Liverpool from Ciudad Rodrigo on the 23rd of November, "I am much afraid that the public will be much disappointed at the result of the last campaign, notwithstanding that it is, in fact, the most successful campaign in all its circumstances, and has produced for the common cause more important results than any campaign in which a British army has been engaged for the last century. We have taken by siege Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, and Salamanca, and the Retiro surrendered. In the mean time the Allies have taken Astorga, Consuegra, and Guadalaxara, besides other places. In the months elapsed since January, this army has sent to England little short of 20,000 prisoners, and they have taken and destroyed or have themselves the use of the enemy's arsenals in Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Valladolid, Madrid, Astorga, Seville, the lines before

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. ix. pp. 582-5.

Cadiz, &c.; and, upon the whole, we have taken and destroyed, or we now possess, little short of 3,000 pieces of cannon. The siege of Cadiz has been raised, and all the countries south of the Tagus have been cleared of the enemy. We should have retained still greater advantages, I think, and should have remained in possession of Castile and Madrid during the winter, if I could have taken Burgos, as I ought, early in October, or if Ballasteros had moved upon Alcaraz, as he was ordered, instead of intriguing for his own aggrandizement. . . . . I see that a disposition already exists to blame the government for the failure of the siege of Burgos. The government had nothing to say to the siege. It was entirely my own act. In regard to means, there were ample means both at Madrid and Santander for the siege of the strongest fortress. That which was wanting at both places was means of transporting ordnance and artillery stores to the place where it was desirable to use them. The people of England, so happy as they are in every respect, so rich in resources of every description, having the use of such excellent roads, &c., will not readily believe that important results here frequently depend upon fifty or sixty mules more or less, or a few bundles of straw to feed them; but the fact is so, notwithstanding their incredulity. I could not find means of moving even one gun from Madrid. . . . As for the two guns which ——— endeavoured to send, I was obliged to send our own cattle to draw them, and we felt great inconvenience from the want of those cattle in the subsequent movements of the army." *

The Prince Regent, the government, and what was decidedly the vast majority of the British nation, again took a fairer view of the services of our illustrious warrior, diplomatist, and statesman. In the course of the year he was raised to the rank of Marquis, and Parliament voted him £100,000 for the purchase of an estate.

During this eventful year, the United States of America saw fit to enter into a war against England, and to cover the seas with fast frigates and privateers. Many of our trading vessels were captured; at times whole convoys, carrying recruits, stores, &c., for our army in the Peninsula were put in jeopardy; some of our old frigates were overmatched by American frigates which were as strong as ships of the line; and, worst of all, the attention of our government was distracted from the war on the Continent. But in the same

* 'Dispatches,' vol. ix. pp. 570-4.

year Napoleon Buonaparte declared war against Russia, and madly crossed the Vistula with by far the greatest army that modern Europe had ever seen.

"Go forward and be choked by thy ambition!"

Campaign of 1813.—During the winter and spring months discipline was restored and improved, our officers profited by the lesson which had been given to them by their great leader; and our army was in admirable condition, and in high spirits before its services were required. By command of his lordship, the large lumbering iron camp-kettles were no longer to be used, and the mules which had hitherto carried them were now to carry tents for the soldiers. Every company was to have three tents. Thus the men off duty would always be provided with some cover in the field, which would save many casualties from sickness. Moreover, expedition in preparing their food, as well as real comfort was gained by issuing small kettles, and dividing the companies into small messes. These changes were vast improvements, promoting comfort and health in a manner not before thought of in our armies. In this winter, also, a pontoon train had been prepared to accompany the line of march in the next campaign.*

The grand army of Buonaparte had perished in Russia. Taken as a mass, the men who had formed it were veterans in crime as well as in war. "*C'etait une race gangrenée qui n'etait plus bonne qu'à mourir!*"†

The Russian catastrophe not only prevented Buonaparte from reinforcing his marshals in Spain, but it also obliged him to recall the best of them, and the only one among them whose generalship had cost Lord Wellington any very serious thoughts. This, of course, was Marshal Soult, who, early in the year, was removed from the Peninsula to oppose the Russians, then about to advance through Germany to the banks of the Rhine and the old frontier of France. Soult, however, took only 20,000 men with him, thus leaving about 70,000 to oppose Wellington, besides the army of Suchet in the eastern provinces. "The army of Portugal," as it continued to be called, was now placed under the command of General Reille, who had his head-quarters at Valladolid; the "Army of the Centre," under Drouet, was distributed round Madrid; and the "Army of the South" had its head-quarters at Toledo. All these

* Captain M. Sherer, 'Military Memoirs of the Duke.'

† It was a gangrened race, no longer good for anything but to die.

forces were nominally under the command of King Joseph; but as Joseph was no soldier, and never could learn to be one, he was assisted by Marshal Jourdan, who could only have earned his great reputation of former days, by being opposed to incompetent or unfaithful commanders. General Clausel and Foy, commanded separate divisions in Arragon and Biscay. Before the campaign began, Andalusia and Estremadura in the south, and Gallicia and Asturias in the north, were entirely free from the French.

Doing at last that which they ought to have done at first, the Spanish Provisional Government, with the consent and approbation of the Cortes, had appointed Lord Wellington to be commander-in-chief of the Spanish armies, and had taken some measures to improve the discipline and effectiveness of their troops. As, however, the Regency had hardly any money except the subsidies they received from England, these things remained only as so many good intentions. Nor were the pride and ignorance of the Spanish commanding officers, and the slothfulness and indocility of their troops, evils that could be remedied of a sudden, or in the course of one trying campaign. And, therefore, the only army upon which Wellington could firmly rely for field operations, consisted of about 63,000 British and Portuguese infantry, and about 6,000 cavalry.

It was the middle of May before his lordship took the field. Then, breaking up from his Portuguese cantonments, he put his army in motion for Spain in three separate bodies; the left under Sir Thomas Graham, the hero of Barrosa; the right under the indefatigable Hill; and the centre under his own immediate command. The combined movements of these three divisions were admirably managed, and without precision and perfect concert such movements never succeed. His lordship directed Graham to pass to the north of the Douro at Lamego, and march through Tras-os-Montes to Braganza and Zamora, and thence upon Valladolid, thus securing the position along the northern bank of the Douro, which the enemy had taken up, and which, with great pains, they had been strengthening. The French were taken completely by surprise, never having anticipated this movement through Tras-os-Montes. Graham reached the Esla, an affluent of the Douro, without meeting a foe. On the 1st of June, having crossed the Esla, Graham encamped near Zamora, the French retreating before him. On the same day, Lord Wellington came up from Salamanca, and joined Graham. On the morrow, the 2nd of June, these two re-

united columns were in full march for Valladolid, the French columns still retiring. On the 3rd, General Hill, who had crossed the Douro at Toro, came up with his division, and the Allied Army was also joined by several Spanish corps.

As Lord Wellington advanced, Joseph Buonaparte fled from Madrid, for the last of many times. He was followed by his court and retainers, who hastily packed up whatever they could carry off with them. The French army retired to Burgos, where they had strengthened the works of the castle. But on the 12th of June, Wellington being near at hand, they abandoned Burgos, blew up the fortifications, and retreated to the Ebro. This line, so much nearer to their own frontiers, the French thought they could defend; and they threw a strong garrison into the fortress of Pancorvo, a little in advance of the river. They were much mistaken. Taking care of the lives of his men, avoiding the fortress and everything which rendered the passage of the Ebro dangerous or difficult, and finding out a new road across a rugged country, towards the sources of the Ebro, his lordship completely turned their position on the river, and drove the French back upon Vittoria, after a sharp affair on the mountain side near Osma. The French were now cut off from the sea-coast, and their immediate evacuation of all the ports in that part of Spain, excepting Santona and Bilbao, was one of the important results. Portugal was no longer to be the depôt for Wellington's supplies; a new base of operations was obtained, and the Tagus was abandoned for the sea-coast of Biscay.*

Rarely had any army traversed a country so difficult as that through which his lordship had led his forces. Hill and valley, roaring torrents and broad, deep, dry ravines; all the difficulties found in an alpine district, were met and surmounted. At times, the labour of a hundred soldiers was required to move forward a piece of artillery; at others, the gun was obliged to be dismounted, lowered down a precipice by ropes, or swayed up the rugged goat-paths by the united efforts of men and animals. "Strongly did the rough veteran infantry work their way through those wild but beautiful regions; six days they toiled unceasingly; on the seventh, swelled by the junction of Longa's division, and all the smaller bands which came trickling from the mountains, they burst like raging streams from every defile, and went foaming into the basin of Vittoria."†

* Maxwell, 'Life of the Duke,' vol. iii. p. 116. † Napier.

While engaged on this novel and daring march, the French had been asking whether Lord Wellington was asleep.

By the 20th of June, the whole of the Allied Army was beyond the Ebro, and concentrated near the picturesque old town of Vittoria, within sight of the ground on which Edward the Black Prince, in the olden time, had gained a splendid victory over the best troops of France. The whole of the 20th, was employed by Wellington in closing up his columns, and in reconnoitring the positions of the French.

The day before, on the 19th, the enemy, commanded by Joseph and Jourdan, had taken up strong ground in front of the town, their left resting upon the heights which terminate at La Puebla de Arganzon, and extending from thence across the valley of the Zadorra, in front of the village of Arinez, the right of their centre occupying a height which commanded all the valley to the Zadorra, and their right being stationed near to the walls of Vittoria, being destined to defend the passages of the river Zadorra. The French had also a reserve, in rear of their left, at the village of Gomecha. By this disposition they covered the three great roads from Madrid, Bilbao and Logrono, which unite at Vittoria. The two hostile armies were nearly equal in numbers, amounting to from 73,000 to 75,000 each. The French lay on their arms as if confident that they could maintain their ground. The evening and the night passed quietly away; but early on the 21st of June, the glorious battle of Vittoria was begun.

Lord Wellington moved his army for the attack in three great divisions. The left, under General Graham, was directed by a circuitous movement to turn the enemy's right across the Bilbao road, and cut off his retreat to France by the Bayonne road ; the right, under General Hill, was to commence the action by crossing the river Zadorra where the road from Madrid to Vittoria intersects the river, and to attack the enemy's left on the high ridge behind the village of Subijana de Alava; and the centre, consisting of the 3rd, 4th, 7th, and light divisions, in two columns, was to attack the French centre. Hill's advance being the first to get into action, obtained possession of the ridge of La Puebla, on which the enemy's left leaned. Marshal Jourdan made repeated and desperate efforts to recover the ridge; but all was in vain, and Hill's battalions, among whom was a Spanish brigade under General Murillo, kept possession of that important post throughout the battle. The contest here was, however, dreadfully severe, and our loss con-

siderable. Murillo was wounded, but remained on the field; Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. H. Cadogan was mortally wounded, but would not be removed. Under cover of the possession of these well-defended heights, the rest of Sir Rowland Hill's division successively crossed the Zadorra, and attacked and gained the village of Subijana de Alava, which also stood on a height. Here, too, the French made desperate efforts to dislodge the allies. The combat was of the deadliest. In the mean while, our other two columns of attack were coming up, or round. But of a sudden Lord Wellington, with the centre, was seen to pause. The French believed then, and reported afterwards, that Wellington was awed by their determined countenance, and that, for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, his column of attack wavered and trepidated. Even English writers, who might have been better informed, took up and repeated the same tale. It was a pure fable. There was no wavering or trepidation whatever; but General Sir George Murray, the admirable quartermaster-general, knowing that Graham would require a little more time to get into action, rode up to the Commander-in-chief, and advised him to wait a short quarter of an hour. Of this fact I was assured by Sir G. Murray himself, at the Ordnance office in 1845, not many months before his lamented death. The difficult nature of the country, prevented communication between our three several columns, so that, for a short time, the centre knew neither what was doing by the right, nor by the left. But in the end everything went well, and the combined movements were executed with what might be called a rare precision, both as to place and time. As the divisions forming our centre crossed the river, the scene exhibited to those on the heights was one of the most animating ever beheld by soldiers. "The whole country," says one, who was both an actor and a spectator, "seemed to be filling with troops; the sun shone bright; not a cloud obscured the brilliant and glowing atmosphere. From right to left, as far as the eye could reach, scarcely the most diminutive space intervened between bodies of troops, either already engaged, or rapidly advancing into action. Artillery and musketry were heard in one continued, uninterrupted volume of sound; and, although the great force of French cannon had not yet opened upon the assailants, the fire had already become exceedingly violent."*

The column under the Earl of Dalhousie, about which

* Colonel Leith Hay, 'Narrative of the Peninsular War.'

some momentary apprehension had been entertained, got to its assigned place. The 4th and light divisions under General Cole, and forming part of our middle column, crossed the Zadorra by the bridges of Nanclaras and Tras-Puentes, immediately after Hill had got possession of Subijana de Alava; and shortly after our 3rd and 7th divisions crossed the river higher up, and these four united divisions marched with firm steps against the centre of the French, who met their advancing columns with a destructive fire of artillery. General Picton's division—the always foremost and always fighting 3rd—coming in contact with a strong body of the enemy drove it back, and captured its guns. With very little more fighting the French centre abandoned its position, and began to retreat in good order towards Vittoria. As Jourdan thus fell back, closing up his long lines, which—like those of Marmont, at Salamanca—had been far too much extended, our troops continued to advance in admirable order, notwithstanding the difficult nature of the ground.

While this was passing in front, General Sir Thomas Graham, moving along the road from Bilbao with our left, had attacked the French right, which was posted on the heights beyond the Zadorra, above the village of Abechuco, and had dislodged it from thence, and then, ascending the right bank of the Zadorra towards the Bayonne road, he carried the village of Gamarra Mayor; and, at nearly the same time, the Spanish division of Longa carried the village of Gamarra Menor, on the right bank of the river opposite the Bayonne road, which runs along the left bank of the river, the heights of which were occupied by two divisions of French infantry in reserve. In the execution of these services Graham's division, including Spanish as well as Portuguese troops, were closely and desperately engaged; and all behaved admirably—more especially some of the Portuguese light troops, called Caçadores. Both at Gamarra Mayor and at Abechuco—which had been strongly occupied as *têtes-de-ponts*, and garnished with great guns—they had advanced under a murderous fire of artillery, with bayonets fixed, and without firing a shot.*

Towards the evening, the main body of the French army having been driven right through the town of Vittoria, the divisions on their right withdrew hastily from their positions; then General Graham (he was there for that purpose) dashing across the Zadorra, took possession of the

* For Lord Wellington's own short, quiet account of this signal victory, see 'Dispatches,' vol. x. p. 446.

Bayonne road by which the enemy meant to retreat towards France; and this movement threw their entire army into irretrievable confusion. The French were obliged, in this state, to alter their line of retreat, and take the road leading to Pamplona; and they were unable to hold any position beyond Vittoria for a sufficient length of time to allow their baggage, stores, and artillery to be drawn off. The whole, therefore, of the artillery which had not already been taken by Lord Wellington's troops in their successive attacks of positions, together with all their ammunition and baggage, and nearly everything else they had, were captured close to Vittoria. "We had beaten them," said one of our officers, "before the town, and in the town, and through the town, and out of the town, and behind the town, and all round about the town." * "I have reason to believe," wrote his lordship, "that the enemy carried off with them one gun and one howitzer only." As darkness set in, the broken French columns mixed and dispersed, running off in all directions. The intruder Joseph had a very narrow escape, the 10th hussars entered Vittoria at the moment that he was hastening out of it in his carriage; one squadron of the 10th under Captain Wyndham, gave pursuit and fired into the carriage; Joseph had barely time to throw himself on a horse and gallop off under the protection of a body of dragoons; the carriage was taken, and in it the most splendid of his trinkets, and some of the most precious articles he had abstracted from the palaces, monasteries, and churches of Spain. M. Lalande, his private secretary, was overtaken and put to death, and several of his attendants were captured or cut down, or shot in their flight by the revengeful Spaniards. In some instances French veterans were seen flying in the dark before handfuls of our camp followers — mere Spanish and Portuguese striplings armed with nothing but their long knives and their implacable fury. Now did the French pay dearly for their burnings of towns and villages, for their massacres *en masse*, and for all the atrocities they had perpetrated.†

It was not a retreat; it was a *débacle*. The French army rallied at no point of its line; nor was the slightest effort made, after passing the city of Vittoria, to check the rapid progress of the Allies. To escape with nothing but life and the clothes on their backs seemed to be their sole object. Their artillery drivers cut their traces, left their

* 'Quarterly Review,' vol. xiii. p. 270.
† 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

guns on the heavy road, and galloped off with their horses. The amount of spoil gathered by the pursuers was immense, and of the most varied description, resembling in many particulars the spoils of an Oriental rather than those of an European army. Joseph Buonaparte—who had been nicknamed by the sober Spaniards "King of the Cooks," "Little Joseph of the Bottles"— was a self-indulging, luxurious, sensual, voluptuary; and wherever he went he carried with him all his luxuries and means of enjoyment. His splendid side-board of plate, his larder, and his cellar, or its choicest contents, fell into the hands of the conquerors; his fine wardrobe, some of his women, and some of his plunder—including splendid pictures by the old Spanish masters—were also taken. Many of the French officers had followed Joseph's example as far as their means had permitted; and thus the finest wines and the richest viands were picked up in profusion. "The wives and mistresses of the officers had gathered together in one house, where they were safe, and from whence they were sent in their own carriages with a flag of truce to Pamplona. Poodles, parrots, and monkeys were among the prisoners. Seldom has such a scene of confusion been witnessed as that which the roads leading from the field of battle presented; broken down waggons stocked with claret and champagne, others laden with eatables dressed and undressed, casks of brandy, apparel of every kind, barrels of money, books, papers, sheep, cattle, horses, and mules, abandoned in the flight! The baggage was presently rifled; and the followers of our camp attired themselves in the gala dresses of the flying enemy. Portuguese boys figured about in the dress-coats of French general officers; and if they happened to draw a woman's wardrobe in the lottery, they converted silks, satins, and embroidered muslins, into scarfs and sashes for their masquerade triumph. Some of the more fortunate soldiers got possession of the army chest, and loaded themselves with money..... The camp of every division was like a fair; benches were laid from waggon to waggon, and there the soldiers held an auction through the night, and disposed of such plunder as had fallen to their share to any one who would purchase it."*

"The soldiers of the army," said Wellington, "have got among them about a million sterling in money, with the exception of about 100,000 dollars which were got for the military chest."†

* Southey, 'Peninsular War.' † 'Dispatches,' vol. x.

Among the innumerable trophies of the field was the baton or marshal's staff of Jourdan. His lordship sent it to the prince regent, who gave him in return the baton of a field-marshal of Great Britain. Of arms and materials of war, there were taken 151 pieces of brass ordnance, 415 caissons, more than 14,000 round of ammunition, nearly 2,000,000 of musket ball cartridges, nearly 41,000 pounds of loose gunpowder, and an immense train of forage waggons, forge waggons, &c. &c.

The French had in many actions made greater slaughter of the Spaniards, but they had never reduced an army, even of raw volunteers, to such a state of total wreck. Not above 1,000 of the fugitives were taken; for, lightened of everything, they ran like lapwings. The country, too, was intersected with canals and ditches, which impeded our cavalry; and our infantry, moving in military order, could not be expected to keep up with a rout that had renounced all order, and was realizing the adage, "the devil may take the hindmost." Moreover, as Wellington deeply regretted, the spoils of the field occupied and detained his troops, and his infantry, by this time, were shoeless. The French acknowledged a loss, in killed and wounded, of 8,000 men; but that loss was unquestionably much greater. The total loss of the Allies was 740 killed, and 4,174 wounded. Lord Wellington was liberal, and even enthusiastic in his praise of all engaged; officers and men. He particularly acknowledged his obligations to Graham, Hill, Morillo, the Hon. W. Stewart, the Earl of Dalhousie, Picton, Sir Lowry Cole, Sir George Murray, Lord Aylmer, and to many others, including Sir Richard Fletcher, and the officers of the royal engineers. He mentioned in his dispatch that his serene highness the hereditary Prince of Orange (the late king of Holland) was in the field as his *aide-de-camp*, and conducted himself with his usual gallantry and intelligence.

The morrow of a victory, however great and glorious, is a day of sadness to all feeling hearts. The dead have to be buried; the wounded to be counted and moved; the knife of the surgeon is at work, and the hospitals ring with cries of anguish, or moans and groans; men look round for men who have fought at their sides in many battles, and shared with them the pleasures of the mess-table, and the frolics of the bivouac, and shudder to find so many places vacant, so many dear comrades gone for ever! Grieving for all, Lord Wellington appears to have grieved most for the gallant

young Cadogan; and, as was his wont, he sat down and wrote condoling letters.

He said to his brother Sir H. Wellesley:—"I am much concerned for the death of Cadogan. He had distinguished himself early in the action. . . . . His private character and his worth as an individual were not greater than his merits as an officer, and I shall ever regret him. . . . . The concern which I feel upon his loss has diminished exceedingly the satisfaction I should derive from our success."*

And again, writing to the same brother four days after the battle, he said, "I know how much you will feel for the loss of poor Cadogan, which has distressed me exceedingly. He was so anxious respecting what was going on, that, after he was wounded, he had himself carried to a place whence he could see all the operations! Pray let George and Louisa know of their misfortune."† He could not away with this mournful subject; and the like intensity of feeling may be traced in his dispatches whenever he has met with a loss of the same nature, or when any brave and good man familiarly acquainted with him has perished. His feelings are always expressed in short but affecting sentences, denoting the most touching of all griefs, the grief of a firm, manly heart with all its feelings habitually under control. Let those who entertain the vulgar idea to which I have already alluded, turn over the Wellington Dispatches, and dismiss it for ever.

The victory at Salamanca had been attended by great events; but these were now surpassed.

The news of this decisive battle of Vittoria gave strength, spirit, and union to the allied armies acting against Buonaparte in Germany, dissipated the last misgivings and indecisions of Austria, broke up the congress assembled at Prague, in Bohemia, which before would have treated with the French, and have left them in possession of many of their conquests; and it gave to the voice of the British Government, and its envoys, a vast increase of consideration and influence. Without this battle of Vittoria and its glorious results in June, there would have been no battle of Leipzig in October.

The flight of the French from Vittoria was favoured by the weather; it rained heavily on the succeeding days, and

* 'Dispatches,' vol. x. p. 454.

† Id. p. 455. The Honourable George and Louisa Cadogan, brother and sister to the deceased colonel.

this, with the consequent state of the roads slackened our pursuit, for, again we had to pursue as a regular army with all its encumbrances. The *Roitelet* Joseph hardly once looked back until he had reached the strong walls of Pamplona, in Navarre, among lofty mountains, the offshoots of the Pyrenean chain. The garrison of that place had been reinforced and well supplied, but it had also received orders to husband its provisions and stores, in case of a siege or blockade; thus they admitted the runagate pretender with his staff and some corps, but would not open the gates to the flying disorganized soldiers, who had lost all signs of discipline, and were starving. These fugitives attempted to force an entrance over the wall of Pamplona; but they were repulsed by a fire of musketry from their own countrymen. After this they continued their flight across the Pyrenees towards France; but, meeting with some supplies, they rallied in the fastnesses of those mountains.

General Clausel, who was coming up fast from Logrono with about 15,000 men, and who would have been on the field of Vittoria if Wellington had delayed his attack, upon learning the issue of that battle, had fled across the central Pyrenees into France, losing all his artillery and most of his baggage on the road. General Foy, who was with another *corps d'armée* near Bilbao, fell back rapidly on the fortress of Bayonne, being followed up by General Graham. A French garrison was left in San Sebastian, which place, as well as Pamplona, was soon invested. Except on the eastern coast, where Suche kept his ground with about 40,000 men, there was not an open spot in all Spain but was freed from the French.

Having established the blockade of Pamplona, and directed Graham to invest San Sebastian, Lord Wellington advanced with the main body of his army to occupy the passes of the Pyrenees, from Roncesvalles, so famed in war and poetry, to Irun, at the mouth of the Bidassoa. His lordship's movements were again impeded by Spanish procrastination and poverty, and by want of proper ammunition and magazines, but by the 7th of July he became master of some of the most important of the mountain passes; and his sentinels looked down from the Pyrenees upon the level plains of France. Thus, in forty-five days from the opening of this memorable campaign, his lordship had conducted the allied army from the Portuguese to the French frontiers!

When Napoleon, in his camp in Saxony, heard of the disaster of Vittoria, he sent Marshal Soult to the Army of

Spain, with the rank of 'Lieutenant of the Emperor.' Soult arrived on the Spanish frontier on the 13th of July, and set about restoring order and confidence in his army, which consisted of nine divisions of infantry, nearly 80,000 men, and three divisions of cavalry. He told them, in a stirring proclamation, that the disasters of the preceding campaign were owing to the pusillanimous councils and unskilful dispositions of their late commanders. 'Let us not, however,' added he, 'defraud the enemy of the praise which is due to him. The dispositions and arrangements of their general have been prompt, skilful, and consecutive, and the valour and steadiness of his troops have been praiseworthy.' He concluded by saying that his instructions from the emperor were, 'to drive the enemy from those lofty heights which enable him proudly to survey our fertile valleys, and drive him across the Ebro. It is on the Spanish soil that your tents must next be pitched, and your resources drawn. . . . Let the account of our success be dated from Vittoria, and the birth of his Imperial Majesty be celebrated in that city.'

When that auspicious day, the 15th of August, arrived, Marshal Soult and his army, instead of being at Vittoria, were on the wrong side of the Pyrenees; and the Allied Army, instead of having been driven beyond the Ebro, was on the Bidassoa, with a firm footing in France.

"Soult's first object was to relieve Pamplona. With this view he collected the main body of his army at St. Jean Pied de Port, and on the 25th of July attacked, with between 30,000 and 40,000 men, the British right at Roncesvalles. General Cole moved to the support of that post, but the French having turned the British position, Cole considered it necessary to withdraw in the night, and march to Zubiri. In the mean time two French divisions attacked General Hill's position in the Puerto de Maya, at the head of the valley of Baztan. At first they gained ground, but were again driven back, when the retrograde movement of General Cole, on his right, induced General Hill to withdraw likewise to Irurita. Lord Wellington, who had his head-quarters at Lesaca, on the left of the army, heard of these movements late in the night, and concentrated his army to the right. On the 27th the French made a partial attack on the 4th division, near Sorauren, but were repulsed. On the 28th Soult directed a grand attack, first on the left, by the valley of the Lanz, and then on the centre of the British position. The 4th division General Cole's, sustained nearly

the whole brunt of the attack, and repulsed the enemy with the bayonet. In one instance the French succeeded in overpowering a Portuguese battalion on the right of General Ross's brigade, at the chapel of Sorauren, which obliged General Ross to withdraw, and the enemy established himself for a moment on the line of the Allies, but Lord Wellington directed the 27th and 48th regiments to charge, and the French were driven down the hill with great loss. Soon after the fighting ceased. On the 29th both armies remained inactive. Soult changed his plan, and on the 30th endeavoured to turn the British left by an attack on General Hill. He collected a large body on his right for this purpose, and by manœuvring on the left flank of Hill's corps, obliged him to withdraw from the height which he occupied behind Lizasso to another range about a mile in the rear, where, however, General Hill maintained himself against every effort that was made to dislodge him. At the same time Lord Wellington attacked the French corps in his front, in a strong position, between the valley of the Lanz and that of Arga, and obliged them to retire. On the morning of the 31st the French were in full retreat into France, by the various passes of the Pyrenees, followed by the Allies, who took many prisoners and much baggage. These various combats are designated by the name of the 'Battles of the Pyrenees.' On the 1st of August Lord Wellington resumed possession of the passes in the mountains." *

The admirable generalship displayed in this series of rapid manœuvres and successful combats, has been recognised by the most competent military critics. It should appear that the government at home had fancied that Wellington might defend the Pyrenees as he had done the heights of Torres Vedras, without allowing the French to penetrate anywhere; but he had shown them beforehand that this was an impossibility. The mountain range to be guarded was not less than 60 English miles in length, the practicable passes were not two or three but eight, and there were other rough roads or paths across the Pyrenees, running between or turning the greater passes, which might be traversed by an enemy so light and nimble as the French. Lord Wellington estimated all the passes, good and bad, at not less than *seventy*.†

* A. Vieusseux, 'Military Life of the Duke.' The dispatches condensed in this brief space extend from p. 567. vol. x. to p. 107. vol. xi. 'Dispatches.'

† Letter to the Earl of Liverpool, dated Lesaca, 25th July. 'Dispatches,' vol. x. pp. 567-70.

The fighting had been tremendous. In the pass of Roncesvalles and the Maya pass, and on the heights above them our people had contended against immense odds — they had fought on the mountain tops, which could scarcely have witnessed any other combats than those of the Pyrenean eagles—they had fought among jagged rocks, and on the brink of profound abysses—they had fought amidst clouds and mists, for those mountain-tops were 5,000 feet above the level of the plains of France, and the rains, which for several days had been falling in torrents, were evaporating in the morning and noon-day sun. When those passes were forced by Soult, Lord Wellington was at a considerable distance. Sir George Murray, his excellent quartermaster-general, at the critical moment, had taken upon himself some heavy responsibility, and his movements and arrangements were afterwards approved and applauded by his lordship; but brave General Picton—as was not unusual with him—had acted precipitately, and in contradiction to the spirit of his instructions, and this gave great uneasiness to the Commander-in-chief. Galloping up at racing speed, almost alone, and at great hazard of being intercepted and made prisoner by the French, he entered the village of Sorauren, where he saw Clausel's divisions close at hand. On the parapet of the bridge of Sorauren he wrote some fresh instructions to Sir George Murray. Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the only staff-officer who had been sufficiently well mounted to keep up with Wellington's thorough-bred English chestnut, galloped with these orders out of Sorauren by one road, the French light cavalry dashed into the village by another, and the English general rode alone up the opposite mountain to reach his troops. "One of Campbell's Portuguese battalions first descried him and raised a cry of joy, and the shrill clamour caught up by the next regiments swelled as it ran along the line, into that stern and appalling shout which the British soldier is wont to give upon the edge of battle, and which no enemy ever heard unmoved. Lord Wellington suddenly stopped in a conspicuous place; he desired that both armies should know he was there, and a double spy who was present pointed out Soult, then so near that his features could be plainly distinguished. The English general, it is said, fixed his eyes attentively upon this formidable man, and, speaking as if to himself, said, 'Yonder is a great commander, but he is a cautious one, and will delay his attack to ascertain the cause of these cheers; that will give time for the 6th division to arrive,

and I shall beat him.' And certain it is that the French general made no serious attack that day."*

In a private letter, written four days after the last of these "Battles of the Pyrenees," Wellington said, "I never saw such fighting as we have had here. It began on the 25th of July, and, excepting the 29th, when not a shot was fired, we had it every day till the 2nd of August. The battle of the 28th was fair *bludgeon work*.†" And writing to Sir Thomas Graham, about the same time, he said, "I hope that Soult will not feel any inclination to renew his expedition. The French army must have suffered greatly. Between the 25th of last month and 2nd of this, they were engaged seriously not less than ten times; on many occasions in attacking very strong positions, in others beat from them or pursued. I understand that their officers say, they have lost 15,000 men. I thought so; but as *they* say so, I now think *more*. It is strange enough that our diminution of strength to the 31st does not exceed 1,500 men, although, I believe, our casualties are 6,000."‡

In their retreat through the passes of the Pyrenees, the French were repeatedly attacked, and had their rear cut up by our pursuing columns. General Edward Barnes with his single brigade, about 1,500 strong, rushed up a steep height under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery, charged Clausel's 6,000 men, and drove them from their position. During this day Lord Wellington, who was grieving that Marshal Soult should have escaped him, was nearly taken prisoner himself. He was standing near the hill of Echalar, examining his maps, with only half a company of the 43rd as an escort. Some French, close at hand, sent a detachment to cut the party off; and such was the nature of the ground that these troops would have fallen upon his lordship unaware, if Sergeant Blood, a young, intelligent, and active man, who had been set to watch in front, had not rushed down the precipitous rocks and given the alarm. As it was, the French arrived in time to send a volley of bullets after his lordship as he galloped away."§

Soult drew close to his reserves behind the Bidassao, put some of his disorganized corps behind the line of his reserves, called loudly for reinforcements, and collected all the detachments and national guards he could. It had previously been proved that in a *rase campagne*, or in any situation approaching to an open country, the veterans of France were not a match for the British infantry, and now

* Napier, 'Hist. of Peninsular War,' vol. vi. p. 130. Edition of 1840.
† Letter to Lord William Bentinck. 'Dispatches,' vol. x. p. 602.
‡ 'Dispatches,' vol. x. p. 591. § Napier, 'Peninsular War,' vol. vi.

they had the additional proof that they were not our match in mountain warfare—a warfare in which the French had hitherto been considered unrivalled.*

During the month of August, General Graham was pressing the siege of St. Sebastian. On the 31st, the assault was made, and the town was carried, but with great loss. The French garrison retired to the castle. Many excesses were committed by the British and Portuguese soldiers after they had entered the town: most of the houses were plundered, and it was not until the 2nd of September that order was restored by severe measures. But as this calamitous affair was made the ground of accusation against the British officers and army in general, we must refer the reader to Lord Wellington's indignant reply to those charges, in a letter to his brother Sir Henry Wellesley, British minister in Spain. Some Spanish party papers went so far as to say that the town was set on fire on purpose by the British, and this insinuation has been repeated by Llorente, in his 'Mémoires de la Révolution d'Espagne,' and by others. "Everything was done," says Lord Wellington, "that was in my power to suggest to save the town Several persons urged me, in the strongest manner, to allow it to be bombarded, as the most certain mode of forcing the enemy to give it up. This I positively would not allow, for the same reasons as I did not allow Ciudad Rodrigo or Badajoz to be bombarded. . . . . Neither is it true that the town was set on fire by the English and Portuguese troops. To set fire to the town was part of the enemy's defence. It was set on fire by the enemy on the 22nd of July, before the final attempt was made to take it by storm; and it is a fact that the fire was so violent on the 24th of July, that the storm, which was to have taken place on that day, was necessarily deferred till the 25th, and, as it is well known, failed. I was at the siege of St. Sebastian on the 30th of August, and I aver that the town was then on fire. It must have been set on fire by the enemy, as I repeat that our batteries, by positive order, threw no shells into the town; and I saw the town on fire on the 31st of August, before the storm took place. It is well known that the enemy had prepared for a serious resistance, not only on the ramparts, but in the streets of the town; that traverses were established in the streets, formed of combustibles, with the intention of setting fire to and exploding them during the contest with the

* 'Annals of the Peninsular Campaign,' by the author of 'Cyril Thornton,'—the late Captain Hamilton.

assailants. It is equally known that there was a most severe contest in the streets of the town between the assailants and the garrison; that many of these traverses were exploded, by which many lives on both sides were lost; and it is a fact that these explosions set fire to many of the houses. . . . . Everything was done that could be done to extinguish the fire by our own soldiers. In regard to the plunder of the town by the soldiers, I am the last man who will deny it, because I know that it is true. It is one of the evil consequences attending the necessity of storming a town, which every officer laments, not only on account of the evil thereby inflicted on the unfortunate inhabitants, but on account of the injury it does to discipline. Notwithstanding that I am convinced that it is impossible to prevent a town in such a situation from being plundered, I can prove that, upon this occasion, particular pains were taken to prevent it. . . . . If it had not been for the fire, which certainly augmented the confusion, and afforded greater facilities for irregularity, and if by far the greater proportion of the officers and non-commissioned officers, particularly of the principal officers who stormed the breach, had not been killed or wounded in the performance of their duty in the service of Spain, to the number of 170 out of about 250, I believe that the plunder would have been, in great measure, though not entirely, prevented."*

The castle of St. Sebastian capitulated after a few days. The siege and capture of the place cost the Allies nearly 4,000 men, killed and wounded. Three British general officers were wounded, and Sir Richard Fletcher, the commanding officer of engineers, was killed.

It is but too easy to account for our great loss before this place. It was not until the 19th of August that transports arrived from England with a good supply of heavy guns and mortars; and then the besiegers were left with only one company of royal sappers and miners — a species of force whose formation had been so long and so absurdly neglected by our government. On the 11th of February 1812, Wellington had written to the Earl of Liverpool— "It is inconceivable with what disadvantages we undertake anything like a siege, for want of assistance of this description. There is no French corps d'armée which has not a *battalion* of sappers and a *company* of miners. But we are obliged to depend for assistance of this description upon the regiments of the line; and, although the men are brave and willing, they want the knowledge and training which are

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. pp. 172-4.

necessary. Many casualties among them consequently occur, and much valuable time is lost at the most critical period of the siege."* Yet, more than eighteen months after this earnest representation, only one company of sappers and miners could be sent out for an important siege!

On the 31st of August, the day of the storm, Soult made an effort to relieve the place. Three divisions of Spaniards, under General Freyre, occupied the left bank of the Bidassoa, supported on the right and left by English and Portuguese brigades. A strong French force forded the Bidassoa, and made a desperate attack on the Spaniards posted on the heights of St. Marcial. The Spaniards bravely stood the attack, charged the enemy with the bayonet, and drove them down the height into the river. A second attack was made and repelled in the same manner. Lord Wellington, who happened to be present, was highly pleased, and said in his dispatches that "the conduct of the Spanish troops was equal to that of any troops he had ever seen engaged."

On the 31st of October the 4,000 French in Pamplona, having lost all hope of relief, surrendered prisoners of war. There was nothing now in the rear of the Allies to cause them any apprehension, or to intercept their communications with the interior of Spain. But before the reduction of Pamplona—though not before that event had been rendered inevitable—Wellington called down part of his troops from the bleak mountain tops, and from the gloomy narrow passes, where, to their infinite discomfort, they had been encamped or hutted for more than two months. During that time, desertions had been rather frequent among them. Men not afraid of the French had run away from a dread of ghosts or dead bodies. One who was at the time an officer among them, says:—"As this was an event which had but rarely occurred before, many opinions were hazarded as to its cause. For my part, I attributed it entirely to the operation of superstitious terror on the minds of the men, and for this reason. It is generally the custom, in planting sentinels in the immediate presence of an enemy, to station them in pairs, so that one may patrol as far as the next post, whilst the other remains steady on his ground. Perhaps, too, the wish of giving greater confidence to the men themselves may have some weight in dictating the measure; at all events, there can be no doubt that it produces that effect. Such, however, was the nature of the ground covered by our piquets among the Pyrenees, that in many places there

* 'Dispatches,' vol. viii. p. 601.

was hardly room for a couple of sentinels to occupy a single post, whilst it was only at the mouths of the various passes that two were more desirable than one for securing the safety of the army. Rugged as the country was, however, almost every foot of it had been the scene of action, whilst the dead, falling among rocks and cliffs, were left in various instances, from necessity, unburied; and exactly in those parts where the dead lay buried, single sentinels were planted. That both soldiers and sailors are frequently superstitious, every person knows; nor can it be pleasant for the strongest-minded among them to spend two or three hours of a stormy night beside a mangled and half-devoured carcass; indeed, I have been myself, more than once, remonstrated with, for desiring as brave a fellow as any in the corps to keep guard near one of his fallen comrades. 'I don't care for living men,' said the soldier; 'but, for God's sake, sir, don't put me beside *him*;' and wherever I could yield to the remonstrance, I invariably did so. My own opinion, therefore, was, that many of our sentries became so overpowered by superstition that they could not keep their ground. They knew, however, that if they returned to the piquet, a severe punishment awaited them; and hence they went over to the enemy, rather than endure the misery of a diseased imagination.

"As a proof that my notions were correct, it was remarked, that the army had no sooner descended from the mountains, and taken up a position which required a chain of double sentinels to be renewed, than desertion in a very great degree ceased. A few instances, indeed, still occurred, as will always be the case where men of all tempers are brought together, as in an army; but they bore not the proportion of one to twenty towards those which took place among the Pyrenees."*

As soon as they were told that they were to be led a march or two upon French ground, the men, recently so gloomy, looked as if they were going to a fair or a feast. The English flag waved triumphantly in the pass of Roncesvalles, where it had been displayed centuries before by Edward the Black Prince, the terror of France, and our bands played the merry march of the "British Grenadiers," and our troops defiled through the other passes which their valour had won. On the 10th of November, the rest of the Allied army were called down from their cold and cheerless positions, and marched into France. Before taking this decisive step,

* Gleig's 'Subaltern.'

Wellington issued an order of the day to all the troops of the various nations that followed his victorious standard. He told "the officers and soldiers to remember that their nations were at war with France, solely because the ruler of the French would not allow them to be at peace, and wanted to force them to submit to his yoke." He told them "not to forget that the worst of the evils suffered by the enemy in his profligate invasion of Spain and Portugal had been occasioned by the irregularities of his soldiers, and their cruelties towards the unfortunate and peaceful inhabitants of the country;" and that "to avenge this conduct on the peaceful inhabitants of France would be unmanly and unworthy of the Allied nations." This proclamation was read over and over again in English, in Portuguese, and in Spanish; and his lordship made it the special duty of all officers to enforce these salutary orders. Nor was it ever left to remain as a piece of merely rhetorical humanity; Wellington took incessant care to carry it into operation; and whenever he found any part of his troops attempting to plunder the peasantry, he not only punished by military law those who were caught in the fact, but he placed the whole regiment or brigade to which they belonged under arms, to prevent further offence. It was difficult to convince the Spaniards and Portuguese, who had so long seen their own country plundered and ransacked and wasted by fire and sword, that they ought not to retaliate upon the French, who had attacked them without the shadow of a provocation. Discipline, however, works miracles; and the Portuguese troops, on the whole, behaved well. But the undisciplined part of the Spaniards, who had been a thorn in his lordship's side ever since he set his foot on the soil of the Peninsula, could not be restrained in their revengeful and marauding propensities. Some excuse for them was, that their government had provided them neither with pay nor provision, neither with clothes nor shoes.

Lord Wellington's letters to the Spanish Generals Morillo, Wimpffen, and Freyre, are evidence of his earnestness and determination not to allow any irregularity of the sort. "Where I command," says he to Freyre, "I declare that no one shall be allowed to plunder. If plunder must be had, then another must have the command. You have large armies in Spain, and if it is wished to plunder the French peasantry you may enter France, but then the Spanish government must remove me from the command of their armies. . . . . It is a matter of indifference to me

whether I command a large or a small army, but whether large or small, the army must obey me, and above all, *must not plunder*."*

General Sir Thomas Picton, a Welshman more peppery than Fluellin, appears always to have been in a passion at somebody or something; but much cooler officers re-echoed the sentiments he expressed as to the value of Spanish troops as co-belligerents in France. In writing to a friend, Picton says,—"The Spaniards, instead of being of any service to us in our operations, are a perfect dead weight, and do nothing but run away and plunder. We should do much better without these vapouring poltroon rascals, whose irregular conduct will indispose every one towards us."† In no very long time, Wellington took the decisive measure of sending back most of these Spanish troops into their own country.

Soult now held a strong position on the Nivelle from St. Jean de Luz to Ainhoe, about twelve miles in length. General Hill, with the British right, advanced from the valley of Baztan, and, attacking the French on the heights of Ainhoe, drove them towards Cambo on the Nive, while the centre of the Allies, consisting of English and Spanish troops under Marshal Beresford and General Alten, carried the works behind Sarre, and drove the French beyond the Nivelle, which the Allies crossed at St. Pré, in the rear of the enemy. Upon this the French hastily abandoned their ground and works on the left of the Nivelle, and in the night withdrew to their entrenched camp in front of Bayonne. Lord Wellington's head-quarters were established at St. Jean de Luz, on the right bank of the Nivelle. The Allies went into cantonments between the sea and the river Nive, where their extreme right rested on Cambo. The enemy guarded the right bank of the Nive from Bayonne to St. Jean Pied de Port. Lord Wellington, being straitened for room and supplies for his large army, determined to cross the Nive and occupy the country between that and the Adour. On the 9th of December, General Hill forded the Nive above Cambo, while the sixth division crossed at Ustaritz, and the French were dislodged from their position at Ville Franque. In the night all their posts were withdrawn to Bayonne, and on the 10th the British right rested on the Adour. On that day Soult, resuming the offensive, issued out of Bayonne, and attacked the British left under

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 395.

† Letter to Mr. Marryat in H. B. Robinson's 'Memoirs of Picton.'

Sir John Hope, which covered St. Jean de Luz, where the Allies had considerable depôts of stores.

The French came on with great spirit, and twice succeeded in driving in the fifth division of the Allies, and twice were repulsed again, the first time by the 9th British and a Portuguese battalion, and the second time by the brigade of Guards; at last, night put an end to the fight. Next morning, 11th December, Soult, having withdrawn in the night most of his force from the position in front of the British left, prepared to attack the light division with overwhelming numbers. General Hope, suspecting this, had moved part of his troops to their right to support the light division. This occasioned another change in Soult's movements, who again directed several columns against the left at Barouilles. The troops were occupied in receiving their rations, and their fatigue parties were engaged in cutting wood, when shouts were heard from the front of "en avant," answered by a corresponding cry of "to arms" among the British. The French columns were close at hand, and the Allies had barely time to run to their arms, when they withstood the attack, and at the close of the day both armies remained in their respective position.

Marshal Soult now giving up any further attempt on the left of the Allies, and imagining that his repeated attacks on that side must have induced Lord Wellington to weaken his right, changed his plan, and during the night of the 12th moved with his main force to his left to attack the British right. Lord Wellington, however, had foreseen this, and had given orders to the fourth and sixth divisions to support the right, and the third division was held in readiness for the same object. General Hill had under his immediate command above 13,000 men, and his position extended across from the Adour beyond Vieux Monguerre to Ville Franque and the Nive. Soult directed from Bayonne on the 13th a force of 30,000 men against his position. His columns of the centre gained some ground, but were fiercely repulsed. An attack on Hill's right was likewise successful at first, but was ultimately defeated. Soult at last drew back his troops towards his entrenched camp near Bayonne. General Hill had withstood all the efforts of the enemy without any occasion for the assistance of the divisions which Lord Wellington had moved towards him. Lord Wellington, well pleased at this, told him—"Hill, the day is all your own." *

* *Résumé* of 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. A. Vieusseux.

In these several affairs the romantic bravery of Sir John Hope excited the admiration of the whole army. In the Commander-in-chief this warm admiration was mingled with friendly apprehensions. When these combats were over, he said—"I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world, but every day's experience convinces me more of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself in fire as he did in the last three days; indeed, his escape then was wonderful. His hat and coat were shot through in many places, besides the wound in his leg. He places himself among the sharp-shooters, without, as they do, sheltering himself from the enemy's fire. This will not answer; and I hope that his friends will give him a hint on the subject." *

Nothing of importance occurred during the few remaining days of the year 1813. Both armies remained in winter-quarters—if so comfortable a name can be given to the positions and lodgings occupied by our troops. Amusements, however, were not quite wanting, although, it appears, that Soult was too near to allow of the pleasures of the chase, in which our officers had indulged a short time previously.

"Lord Wellington's fox-hounds were unkennelled, and he himself took the field regularly twice a week, as if he had been a denizen of Leicestershire, or any other sporting county in England. I need not add that few packs in any county could be better attended. Not that the horses of all the huntsmen were of the best breed, or of the gayest appearance; but what was wanting in individual splendour was made up by the number of Nimrods; nor would it be easy to discover a field more fruitful in laughable occurrences, which no man more heartily enjoyed than the gallant Marquis himself. When the hounds were out, he was no longer the commander of the forces, the general-in-chief of three nations, and the representative of three sovereigns; but the gay, merry, country gentleman, who rode at everything, and laughed as loud when he fell himself as when he witnessed the fall of a brother sportsman." †

The peasantry dwelling near that frontier of France were devout papists and Bourbonists at heart. As Soult had retired, they had begun to give sundry signs of good feeling towards Lord Wellington and his army. Worn out

* Letter to Colonel Torrens, 'Dispatches,' vol. xi.

† The 'Subaltern.'

by the military conscription, and the monstrous excess to which it had been carried during the last three years they saw no end to their evils except in peace, which was to be obtained only by the overthrow of Buonaparte. They could no longer bear to see their sons torn from them, to be made food for cannon—*chair à canon*. Flesh or meat for cannon was the epithet commonly applied to young conscripts towards the end of this war! Seeing that the English did not plunder, and that excellent discipline was maintained, those peasants and little farmers of the south of France came flocking to our camp, with their poultry and vegetables, and oil and wine; and there they were fairly paid for whatever they provided.

Campaign of 1814.—In an early stage of the Peninsular war, the Earl of Liverpool and Viscount Castlereagh had ventured to predict that the day might not be very far distant when an English army would traverse France as conquerors, and a British general march into Paris as our Edwards and Henrys had done. For this their lordships had been exposed to much ridicule; but that period seemed now fast approaching, and it was for some time doubtful whether that which really occurred in 1815 might not happen in the present year, 1814. In our Parliament, even that loud-tongued oppositionist, Mr. Whitbread, joined his voice in applause and thanksgiving, and declared that never did a more favourable opportunity present itself for us to exert our strength. But the most eloquent speech in the Commons was delivered by Mr. Charles Grant, jun. (now Lord Glenelg), who praised Lord Wellington particularly for this—that, by an undaunted and intrepid spirit, the sure proof of a genius confident of its resources, he had been enabled to defy the public opinion as to the invincibility of the French. Wellington had never sunk under the weight of the enormous fame which had been made to surround Massena, Marmont, Jourdan, Soult, and the other French marshals and generals; and he had, turn and turn about, foiled or beaten them all! Lord Castlereagh, with a not-unbecoming national pride, detailed some of the exertions which England had made in 1813—a year in which she had most importantly aided in arms, ammunition, provisions, money, and otherwise, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Bavaria,—every country which had entered the lists against Buonaparte, and nearly every district in Europe which had shown a disposition to cast off his yoke. It was resolved (partly in consequence of the war with the United

States of America) to raise our naval forces to 140,000 sailors and 31,000 marines, and to strengthen our land-forces on the continent. The opposition party raised some murmurs about expense, but they found no echo in the country, which was excited by victory, and comforted by the conviction that the fall of the bitterest enemy we had ever known was now close at hand.

The last act of the drama was played off rapidly—the mighty conflict which had been carried on between France and the rest of Europe was almost at its close. The battle of Liepzig, fought in October 1813, had hurried on the inevitable catastrophe. There Buonaparte had lost another army which he had got together, with great pains, after the disasters of the Russian campaign. The remnant of that army had been driven out of Germany and across the Rhine, the Allies practically refuting Napoleon's argument that the Rhine was the neutral and must remain the inviolable frontier of France—a frontier within which his over-vaulting ambition had not allowed him to contain himself. He was now left no other resources than those he could draw from France herself. Lord Wellington had long foretold that, when that should come to be the case, the feelings of the French population would turn against him. Napoleon had hitherto supported his enormous armies chiefly at the expense of foreign states. "War must be with him a financial resource," thus wrote Lord Wellington in January 1812, to Baron Constant, an officer of distinction attached to the Prince of Orange; "and this appears to me the greatest misfortune which the French Revolution has entailed upon the present generation. I have great hopes, however, that this resource is beginning to fail; and I think there are symptoms of a sense in France either that war is not so productive as it was, or that nations who have still something to lose may resist, as those of the Peninsula have, in which case the expense of collecting this resource becomes larger than its produce."*

Such was the prescience of our illustrious soldier two years before the period at which we are now arrived, and when four-fifths of the statesmen of Europe seemed to believe that the Corsican had a talisman which would enable him to carry on war for ever, irrespectively of any considerations of finance, supplies of provisions, foreign conscripts, and foreign contingents.

On his return to Paris in November 1813, Napoleon de-

* 'Dispatches,' vol. viii. p. 581 to p. 583.

creed, by a *senatus consultum*, a new levy of 300,000 conscripts. This was not a pacific prelude. In December, he ordered the assembling of 180,000 national guards to garrison the towns and fortresses. He talked, however, of peace, but he wanted Antwerp, Ostend, Belgium, Savoy, &c.; he hesitated, he lost time in agreeing to the preliminary basis of a treaty such as was offered to him by the Allied powers at Châtillon; he left his own envoy there without instructions or powers; he wished, in short, to try once more the chances of war. On the 25th of January 1814, he left Paris for Châlons to attack the Prussians and Russians.

Lord Wellington now made his preparations to drive the army of Soult from all the country on the left of the Adour. About the middle of February, by a succession of movements and partial engagements, he drove the French first from the Bidassoa, and afterwards across the Gave d'Oléron, an affluent of the Adour. On the 27th of February, he met Soult's army concentrated at Orthez on the Gave de Pau, attacked and beat it and pursued it to the Adour, the French retiring to the eastward towards Auch. On the 1st of March Lord Wellington's head-quarters were at St. Sever, north of the Adour. The loss of the Allies at the battle of Orthez was 277 killed, and about 2,000 wounded or missing. The loss of the French army was considerable during the battle, and still more during the retreat, owing to desertion having spread to a great extent, especially among the conscripts, who threw away their arms in vast numbers. The battle of Orthez had important results. The garrison of Bayonne was now left to its fate, and the road to Bordeaux laid open to the Allies. Lord Wellington gave orders to General Hope for the siege of Bayonne, and detached Marshal Beresford with two divisions to occupy the fair and mercantile city of Bordeaux. Beresford and his force were received as friends and allies, the mayor and most of the inhabitants of Bordeaux having of their own accord proclaimed Louis XVIII.

As the Allied Powers had not yet pledged themselves to support the Bourbon cause, or not to treat with Buonaparte as the ruler of France, Lord Wellington had most particularly and emphatically instructed Beresford not to originate nor encourage any rising of the Bourbon party; on no account to encourage hopes which might be disappointed, or to excite insurrectionary movements which might be put down and avenged with blood, if the Allied sovereigns should even-

tually negotiate a peace with the present ruler, and leave Buonaparte on the throne of France. As yet, all the great powers of Europe acknowledged that man as emperor, a congress of their Ministers was sitting at Châtillon sur Seine, in which Napoleon's envoys were admitted, notwithstanding the marchings of the Russians and Prussians in the provinces of France and the uninterrupted course of hostilities. His lordship had always been extremely cautious about interfering, without positive orders from his own Government, in the internal affairs or home politics of other countries, and his whole correspondence proves his caution and discretion with regard to Spain, and the various red-hot factions of liberals and absolutists which were already quarrelling there. He knew better than any man, that the irreconcilable pretensions of these two fierce factions must sooner or later plunge Spain into an anarchy; but he also knew that it was not by foreign arms that those Spanish quarrels were to be made up, and he hoped to have done with the war before this great storm could break out in his rear. His business was purely military; in Spain it had been to drive the invader out of the country, and then leave the people to settle their own affairs. In France, upon the same principle, he was averse to giving any countenance to a royalist rising and a civil war. The Duke of Angoulême having landed in the south of France to excite a movement in favour of the Bourbons, Lord Wellington advised him politely to keep incognito, and to wait for some important demonstration in his favour. When Beresford marched upon Bordeaux, we have seen what were his orders. "If," said his lordship, "they should ask you for your consent to proclaim Louis XVIII., to hoist the white standard, &c., you will state that the British nation and their Allies wish well to Louis XVIII.; and as long as the public peace is preserved where our troops are stationed, we shall not interfere to prevent that party from doing what may be deemed most for its interest: nay, further, that I am prepared to assist any party that may show itself inclined to aid us in getting the better of Buonaparte. That the object of the Allies, however, in the war, and, above all, in entering France, is, as is stated in my proclamation—*peace*; and that it is well known the Allies are now engaged in negotiating a treaty of peace with Buonaparte. That, however I might be inclined to aid and support any set of people against Buonaparte while at war, I could give them no further aid when peace should be con-

cluded; and I beg the inhabitants will weigh this matter well before they raise a standard against the government of Buonaparte and involve themselves in hostilities. If, however, notwithstanding this warning, the town should think proper to hoist the white standard, and should proclaim Louis XVIII., or adopt any other measure of that description, you will not oppose them; and you will arrange with the authorities the means of drawing, without loss of time, for all the arms, ammunition, &c., which are at Dax, which you will deliver to them. If the municipality should state that they will not proclaim Louis XVIII. without your orders, you will decline to give such orders, for the reasons above stated." And to the royalist mayor of St. Sever he wrote on the same subject:—"I have not interfered in any way in what has happened at Bordeaux, and if the department of the Landes, or any town of the department, chooses to acknowledge the house of Bourbon, I shall not oppose it; but I cannot enjoin to the individuals or the authorities of those districts which, by the operations of the war, have fallen under my order, to take a step which must commit them personally, because, if peace should be made, I must cease to give them that assistance which I could afford them under existing circumstances."*

For the sake of humanity, for the sake of his own and his nation's honour, he was most anxious to avoid a foul disgrace which had several times been incurred in the progress of this long war,—we had given premature encouragement to partisans, we had urged them to take the field, we had put arms in their hands, and had then found ourselves under the necessity of abandoning them to the mercy of their powerful enemies. Thus no encouragement was given to the French royalists as an active counter-revolutionary party, until Buonaparte had abdicated the throne and taken his departure for the island of Elba. In the month of February or March, a general insurrection in the south of France would, no doubt, have facilitated the work in hand, and have given great satisfaction to the Bourbon princes and their agents, who constantly surrounded and importuned his lordship, and who not unfrequently complained that he was injuring their cause by throwing cold water upon the loyal enthusiasm of the French; but it suited not the political morality of Wellington to commit the lives and fortunes of these royalists before he knew that they would *not* be abandoned, before he knew, for a certainty, that the Allies would not

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. pp. 558 and 599.

make a peace which should leave Buonaparte on the throne. And yet, while he was pursuing this line of conduct, Marshal Soult and General Gazan issued a turgid and insulting proclamation, accusing him of fomenting revolt and civil war in France; and of seeking to obtain, by means of intestine faction, those advantages which he could not gain by the sword.* And this, too, was said when the sword of Wellington had lowered the horn of every marshal and general that had been opposed to him, and had cut his way from the banks of the Tagus far into the interior of France, badly aided, often unsupported, and still oftener thwarted or impeded by an infinitude of causes and vexatious circumstances, which would have broken the heart or have turned the brain of almost any other commander.† This disgraceful proclamation, which could still deceive Frenchmen remote from the scene of action, did, indeed, go to prove the justness of a remark which his lordship had made long ago, when the system was in its perfection, that it was impossible for the people of France to know the truth, the whole system of Buonaparte's government being based on trickery and deception.

With regard to those, and they were but few, who manifested a wish to carry on a partisan warfare in the interest of Napoleon, and against the Allies, Lord Wellington wrote to the mayors and other authorities, that the inhabitants could not be allowed to remain in their villages and act as soldiers at the same time. "Those who wish to be soldiers must go and serve in the enemy's lines, and those who wish to live quietly at home, under the protection of the Allied troops, must not bear arms. The Commander-in-chief will not allow any one to follow both courses; and any person found in arms in the rear of the army shall be judged according to military laws, and treated in the same manner as the enemy's generals have treated the Spaniards and Portuguese."‡

On the 18th of March, Lord Wellington advanced his victorious columns to Vic Bigorre, and Soult retreated to some good positions at Tarbes. It was thought that the French marshal would risk a general battle here, but he did not, continuing on the 20th his retreat towards Toulouse, where he arrived on the 24th. The main object of Soult's movements was to facilitate a junction with Marshal Suchet, who, at last, was evacuating Catalonia and all the eastern coast of Spain.

* See 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 594.
† 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III. vol. iv.
‡ 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 618.

Before the close of the preceding year, Napoleon had given up his last faint hope of conquest; but he yet hoped to make Spain, and his prisoner the weak King of Spain, the means of weakening England, and creating jealousy and discord among the members of the Grand Alliance.

Knowing the character of Ferdinand, he had written to him on the 12th of November 1813, saying,—"That the circumstances of the times made him wish to conclude at once the affairs of Spain, where England was fomenting anarchy and jacobinism, and was depressing the nobility in order to establish a republic. He (Napoleon) was much grieved to see the destruction of a nation bordering upon his empire, and whose maritime interests were closely connected with his own. He wished therefore to remove all pretence for the influence of England to interfere in the affairs of Spain, and to re-establish the relations of friendship and good neighbourhood between the two nations."* A treaty was concluded at Valençay, where Ferdinand had been detained a prisoner for five years, in which Napoleon acknowledged him as King of Spain and of the Indies, and promised to withdraw the French troops from Spain; whilst Ferdinand engaged to cause the English to evacuate Spain, to pay his father King Charles an annual pension of 30,000,000 of reals, and to confirm those of his subjects who had taken service under Joseph in their titles and honours. Ferdinand dispatched the Duke of San Carlos to Madrid, with a copy of the treaty, directing the Regency to ratify it. The Regency replied with many expressions of satisfaction at the approaching liberation and restoration of their king, and enclosed at the same time a copy of the decree of the Cortes, passed a year or two before, declaring that no act of the king, while in a state of captivity, should be considered as valid. The treaty, therefore, remained without effect, and Ferdinand did not re-enter Spain for three months after. "Nothing," said Wellington, "can be more satisfactory than the whole conduct of the Spanish Government regarding the negotiations for peace. . . . . I am certain that no government would act better than they have in this most important of all concerns; and I doubt that any Regency under the existing constitution would have power to act better in other matters more peculiarly of internal concern."† But his lordship had soon reasons to qualify this praise.

Being hard pressed for troops for the defence of France,

* Thibaudeau, 'Histoire de l'Empire,' ch. 94.

† Letter to Sir H. Wellesley. 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 478.

wishing to avail himself of the army of Suchet, and seeing that nothing could be gained by keeping his captive any longer, while something might be got by releasing him, Buonaparte ordered King Ferdinand to be let loose and whisked across the Pyrenees. Ferdinand reached Perpignan on the 22nd of March, and there agreed with Suchet to allow him to withdraw all the forces he had in the field, and all the garrisons he had in the fortresses of Catalonia, which garrisons were all blockaded by the Spaniards, and very near the capitulating point. But the Spanish Regency and Cortes had previously resolved that these garrisons should not be allowed to return to France with their arms; and they had referred the question to Lord Wellington, who had declared, in the strongest manner, that the said garrisons in Catalonia, or any other French force whatsoever, ought to be allowed no capitulation, except on the condition of their being prisoners of war. From 15,000 to 16,000 Frenchmen were shut up in these garrisons; they were not conscripts, beginning a campaign under most disastrous circumstances, but, for the most part, veteran troops, with a spirit as yet unbroken by any decisive defeat; and if Suchet could have united his entire force and have brought it in time to join Soult on the Garonne, the enemy must have been too strong for Wellington, whose forces were much weakened by the blockade of Bayonne and the occupation of Bordeaux. So inactive, however, had been the Regency and the Spanish General Copons and other commanders in the east, that Suchet had already been enabled to detach 10,000 men into France; and, the same causes continuing, he was now allowed to move off with the 14,000 disposable men he had in the field, leaving his garrisons behind him. From the defiles of Catalonia, where he ought to have been crushed or reduced to an unconditional surrender, Marshal Suchet rapidly marched across the broad isthmus which joins France to Spain; but it was the beginning of April before he reached Narbonne, and then he halted. He had still a very long march to perform ere he could make a junction with Soult. And as part of the Austrian army had poured into France through Switzerland, and had reached Lyons, and had established its outposts considerably to the south of that great city, he had to fear that it might interpose in force between him and Toulouse.

Soult, as we have seen, arrived at Toulouse on the 24th of March. On the 27th Lord Wellington was close to him, in front of Toulouse; but the broad, deep, and rapid river

Garonne flowed between them, the best passages were defended by French artillery, and the English pontoons and other means of carrying over troops, cannon, and stores, were as yet very defective. It had rained pitilessly for many days, and the rain, besides making the bad roads worse, swelled the river Garonne, and rendered the passage of the Allies more difficult. It was, therefore, the 9th of April before Wellington got his army across to the right bank of the river. On the 10th, was fought the bloody battle of Toulouse. This has been held by many to have been a useless display of heroism, and an unnecessary waste of human life; but the British general was totally ignorant of the events which had really rendered the combat unnecessary; and he had one great motive and incentive to fight the battle. This was to beat and scatter the army of Soult before it could be joined by Suchet, and to prevent that co-operation of the two marshals which might have revived the hopes of the beaten Napoleon, and have brought him down to the south to try another throw of the dice. If this had happened, and if the Austrians had failed in moving rapidly forward from Lyons, the weakened army of his lordship would have been exposed to the chances of a reverse, and of a long and disastrous retreat. Under all the circumstances, every wise general would have given battle at Toulouse, as Lord Wellington did.

Even since the arrival of our army on the Garonne, Soult —through the causes already indicated—had been allowed thirteen days to make his defensive preparations. He now occupied another entrenched camp, of a very formidable description, on the eastern side of the city of Toulouse, on a range of heights between the river Ers and the great canal of Languedoc. He had redoubts and entrenchments, and tremendous *têtes de pont* both on the river and on the canal, which must both be crossed by the Allies. To strengthen his own army in Champagne, Buonaparte had made large drafts upon Soult's army of the south, yet the marshal had pretty nearly an equality in number, while in artillery he had a vast superiority. According to the best calculation which has been made, Soult had not less than 42,000 men. Wellington had, in British, Germans, and Portuguese about 30,000, and in Spaniards about 15,000. Deduct 7,500 from the Spaniards, who, generally speaking, were not worth half their number of British troops, and Soult had an actual superiority of 4,500 men, and his entrenched camp and fortification were to him worth some

thousands of combatants. Nearly the whole of his position was bristling with guns, and many of these were so placed in battery on the summits of hills, that they could make a plunging fire into our ascending columns of attack. Moreover, there were many strongly-built houses, which had been fortified and crammed with *tirailleurs;* and there were scattered villages, strong stone walls separating the vineyards and orchards, and a multiplicity of streamlets, and of trenches cut for the purposes of irrigation. All the roads too continued to be in a deplorable state—a far greater disadvantage to those who had to march considerable distances to get to the attack than to those who were fixed and stationary, and who had to meet the attack behind prepared and fortified lines. Most fortunately the 18th hussars, under the immediate command of Colonel Vivian, had previously attacked and defeated a superior body of French cavalry, and driven them from an important bridge over the Ers, had pursued them through the village of Croix d'Orade, had taken about 100 prisoners, and had given time to the British infantry to come up and secure the bridge for the Allies.*

As day dawned on the morning of the 10th of April—it was Easter Sunday, the holiest of all Sabbaths, a day of peace and reconciliation, and the church-bells of the distant villages were calling the devout peasantry to matins and early mass—the columns of the Allies began to move to their various points of attack, and to one of the fiercest and deadliest scenes that war can present. Marshal Beresford moved first with the 4th and 6th divisions, which crossed the Ers by the bridge of Croix d'Orade. After some hard fighting, Beresford gained possession of the village of Montblanc, and then attacked and carried some heights on Soult's right, together with a redoubt which had been intended to cover and protect that flank; but the French were still in

* The eloquent military historian of the war, who is too fond of detecting errors, says that the credit of this brilliant cavalry affair was *incorrectly given* in the dispatch to Colonel Vivian, for that officer was wounded by a carbine-shot previous to the charge at the bridge, and the attack was conceived and conducted entirely by Major Hughes of the 18th. (See Napier, Book xxiv.) I always prefer the authority of the 'Dispatches' to any other. The Commander-in-chief always took the greatest pains to make them correct, and he was never the man to give to one officer the praise due to another—whatever might be the difference of rank, or birth, or other circumstances. I have always understood that Colonel Vivian was wounded on the bridge, after the attack had been conceived, and when it was succeeding.

possession of four other redoubts, and of the entrenchments and fortified houses, from which they could not be dislodged without artillery; and to drag heavy guns up those steeps and over those bad roads was work that required time, and the exertions of men as well as horses.

Nearly at the same moment that Beresford fell upon Soult's right, Wellington threw forward the Spanish division of General Freyre to fall upon Soult's left. At first these Spaniards were repulsed, and being panic-stricken by the fire of the redoubts, and then being charged by French bayonets, the mass of them began a flight down the hills, which might have been attended with disastrous consequences; but one Spanish light regiment, the Tiradores de Cantabria, got well under the French entrenchments, standing firmly, and then the British light division, coming up at the charging pace, rallied the Spaniards who had given ground, and advanced with them to the attack with an irresistible fury, and a firmness proof to wounds and death. Many officers, as well Spanish as English, were wounded, and the men were mowed down by whole ranks at a time; but there they stood on the brow of that hill until Wellington was enabled to reinforce them, and until Beresford had made sure of the victory by breaking and turning the French right.

Marshal Beresford had left his artillery in the village of Montblanc, and, notwithstanding all the exertions that were made, some considerable time elapsed before the guns could be brought up. During this trying interval Beresford's two divisions were exposed to the hot cannonade of Soult's batteries; but the men sheltered themselves as best they could behind the redoubt they had captured. As soon as his artillery was up (it was about the hour of noon), Beresford continued his movement along the ridge, and carried, with the single brigade of General Pack, the two principal redoubts, and all the fortified houses in the enemy's centre. The French made a desperate effort to regain those redoubts, but they were repulsed by the British bayonets. General Taupin, who had led them on, was slain; and Beresford's 6th division moving farther along the ridge of the heights, and the Spanish troops making a corresponding movement upon the front, the French were soon driven from the two redoubts, and the entrenchments they had on their left; and the whole range of heights, which had been fortified with such pains, remained in the undisturbed possession of Beresford and the Allies.

The French withdrew with some confusion across the canal of Languedoc into the town of Toulouse, which Soult at one time thought of defending.

Victory could not be gained on such ground, and in the teeth of so many strong works, without great loss: 600 of the Allies lay dead upon the field, and about 4,000 wounded were picked up. Soult confessed to 3,200 in killed and wounded, and as his people had fought in good part under cover, it is probable that this time his army suffered somewhat less than the Allies. Our loss fell the heaviest on Beresford's 6th division. Some divisions of our army were not engaged at all, being held in reserve, ready to fight if they should be wanted. But Picton, with his "fighting 3rd," getting his Welsh head heated, committed an act of imprudence, engaging in earnest where he had been ordered only to make a feint, and storming a tremendous *tête de pont* instead of merely observing it. In the repulse sustained at this point a good many of the fighting men were laid low, Major-General Brisbane was wounded, and Colonel Forbes of the 45th was killed. Before the hour of *Ave Maria* the Allies were established on three sides of Toulouse, and the French were driven by Sir Rowland Hill from their exterior works in the suburb, on the left of the Garonne, within the ancient walls of the town.* Our cavalry paraded along the banks of the river Ers, guarding the Montpelier road.

The 11th of March was spent by the Allies in bringing up ammunition and stores, and getting the artillery in positions, an attack being fixed by Wellington for daylight on the 12th; but, during the night of the 11th, Marshal Soult evacuated Toulouse by the only road which was still open to him, and retired by Castelnaudry to Carcassonne. On the 12th Lord Wellington entered Toulouse, to the great joy of the inhabitants, who were relieved from the fearful apprehensions of a siege. The white flag was flying, everybody had put on white cockades, and the people had pulled down Napoleon's statue, and the eagles and other emblems of the imperial government. The municipality of Toulouse presented an address to Lord Wellington, requesting him to receive the keys of their city in the name of Louis XVIII. Lord Wellington told them what he had told the people of Bordeaux, that he believed the negotiations for peace were still being carried on with the existing government of France, and that they must

* 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 601-3.

judge for themselves whether they meant to declare in favour of the Bourbons, in which case it would be his duty to treat them as Allies as long as the war lasted; but if peace should be made with Napoleon, he could not give them any more assistance or protection afterwards.*

In the afternoon, however, of the same day the English Colonel Cooke, and the French Colonel St. Simon, arrived from Paris, with the news of Napoleon's first abdication, and of the establishment of a provisional government, in the name of Louis XVIII. From Lord Wellington's head-quarters the two officers proceeded to those of Marshal Soult, who did not think himself justified in submitting to the provisional government, having received no information from Napoleon concerning what had happened; but he proposed an armistice to Lord Wellington. The British commander wrote to him a very polite letter, excusing himself from accepting the armistice, unless the marshal acknowledged the provisional government of France.† At the same time he made preparations to pursue Soult, if required. The object of Lord Wellington was to prevent Marshals Soult and Suchet's armies becoming the *noyau* of a civil war in France in favour of Napoleon's pretensions for his son, or in favour of Napoleon himself. That daring man had not yet quitted France; his act of abdication might not be very binding upon one who had never been bound by any act, agreement, or treaty; he was not a prisoner, but still surrounded by many of his devoted guards; by the route traced out for him from Fontainebleau, to the island of Elba, he must traverse the southern provinces and approach Suchet's army—and might he not join that army and endeavour to effect a junction with Soult? Thus the same reasons which induced Wellington to give battle at Toulouse still existed. At last, on the 18th of April, Soult, having received from Berthier an order to stop all hostilities, concluded a convention with Lord Wellington for the purpose. A line of demarcation was drawn between the two armies. The head-quarters of Lord Wellington remained at Toulouse. Marshal Suchet concluded a like convention with Lord Wellington on the 19th, by which the final evacuation of Catalonia by the French garrisons was provided for.

On the 21st April, Lord Wellington, by general orders to his gallant army, congratulated them on the prospect of a speedy termination of their labours, and at the same time "thanked them for their uniform discipline and gallantry

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. p. 603. † Id. vol. xi. p. 641.

in the field, and for their conciliating conduct towards the inhabitants of the country."

The behaviour of our troops at Toulouse, Bordeaux, and the other towns and numerous villages they occupied, appears to have been in all respects excellent, and marked with more kindness towards the inhabitants than those people had been accustomed to receive from the later armies of the now fallen emperor.

On the 14th of April, four days after Soult's defeat at Toulouse, when the Allies were in full possession of that city, and Soult was flying rather than retreating from it, General Thouvenot, who commanded in Bayonne, chose to make a desperate sortie upon the unprepared Allies, who had received from Toulouse the Paris intelligence, and who all had reason to believe that Thouvenot had received it also through a French channel. The real state of affairs at Paris had been communicated to Thouvenot by General Sir John Hope the day before, and although that officer affected to doubt the authenticity, Hope, judging of other men by his own generous nature, evidently could not conceive that he would be capable of what must now be considered a base surprise, a savage spite, and a wilful shedding of blood. For some time Thouvenot and his garrison had been very inactive. As the works of the siege had not commenced, there were neither guns nor stores upon the ground to tempt a sortie. The investing forces were quiet in their positions and cantonments, and many of them were buried in sleep, and dreaming of an end to war's alarms, and of a speedy return to their own countries, when the French, long before it was daylight, sallied forth from the citadel in great strength, and fell furiously upon our sleeping people and weak pickets. A considerable slaughter was committed before the Allied troops could be got under arms and into formation. Major-general Hay was killed, and Major-general Stopford wounded. Sir John Hope, ever foremost when there was danger, mounted his horse, and galloped up in the dark to direct the advance of troops to the support of the pickets. He was presently surrounded; his horse was shot under him and fell, he received two severe wounds and was made prisoner. So dark was it, that for some time the French and English could distinguish each other's ranks only by the flashing of the muskets. The guns of the citadel, vaguely guided by the flashes of the musketry, sent their shot and shell at random through the lines of fight, smashing

quite as many of their own people as they struck of the Allies; and the gun-boats, dropping down the river, opened their fire upon the flank of the supporting columns which Sir John Hope had put in motion. Thus, nearly 100 pieces of artillery were in full play at once; and the shells having set fire to the fascine depots and to several houses, the flames cast a horrid glare over the scene of the confused conflict.* The fighting was very severe; but it was terminated by British bayonet charges: the French were driven back, the little ground which had been lost was all recovered, and by seven o'clock in the morning our pickets were reposted on their original grounds. But between killed and wounded and taken, the Allies had lost 800 men. It was, under the circumstances, scarcely a consolation to know that the French had suffered still more severely, and that many of their casualties were caused by the indiscriminating fire of their own guns. General Thouvenot's conduct was throughout that of a savage. The capture of Sir John Hope, and the knowledge that he was very severely, if not mortally, wounded, carried affliction to the bosom of every man who had been serving under him. Major-general C. Colville, who succeeded to the command, sent a flag of truce to request that Hope's friend, Colonel Macdonald, might be admitted into the fortress to see him and carry him assistance. Thouvenot had the brutality to refuse this request, and another which was made after it. It was the embarrassing destiny of Louis XVIII. to be compelled to honour and reward some of the greatest scoundrels that had sprung from the filth of the revolution, and who had struggled most desperately and remorselessly to keep Buonaparte upon the throne. Thus, on the 27th of June following, the restored Bourbon king was made to confer the cross of St. Louis upon Thouvenot, and to confirm him in his command at Bayonne. In this case, as in thousands of other cases, the royal favour was rather worse than thrown away. As soon as Buonaparte returned from Elba, Thouvenot broke his oath of allegiance to Louis, and declared for the emperor. Yet in ninety-nine out of every hundred French books relating to the history of the war, Thouvenot is applauded to the skies as a brave, honourable man and true patriot, the climax of whose fame was his bloody and useless sally from Bayonne! With such false notions of honour, with such a public morality, what could have been expected but the events which happened in 1815, and those other convulsions which

* Napier.

have kept France in a state of orgasm ever since? Soult was also honoured by Louis XVIII, and was also one of his betrayers. So was it with the sanguinary Suchet, who, had he found the opportunity, would most assuredly have behaved to the Allies after the fashion of Thouvenot.

The sortie of Bayonne was the last affair of the war in 1814; but the battle of Toulouse was the last real battle, and the glorious winding up of Lord Wellington's long contests with Soult. It was a remarkable combat; but the most remarkable part of the story yet remains to be told —the French claimed, and to this day most pertinaciously and loudly claim, the victory!

The brief preceding account of the battle, in which everything is clear and simple, is derived entirely from the dispatches and private letters of Lord Wellington, who never exaggerated a success or concealed a reverse, who never spoke or wrote of his victories except in a short, quiet, modest manner, who never, in his life, spun a rhetoric sentence about the exploits of his army, and never once dwelt on his own skill or prowess.

On no former occasion, not even after the great battle at Vittoria, which the French themselves are compelled to admit was a complete and decisive victory, had his lordship spoken more decidedly as to his having beaten the enemy. In a private letter to General Sir John Hope, written six days after the battle, he said—"We *beat* Marshal Soult on the 10th in the strong position at Toulouse. The 11th was spent in reconnaissances towards the road of Carcassonne, and in the arrangements to be adopted for shutting him in Toulouse entirely. The 11th, at night, he evacuated the town, and marched by the road of Carcassonne." Before sunset on the 10th, the Allies had carried all the positions that it was necessary to carry, and Soult was driven into Toulouse, where he could not venture to stay much more than twenty-four hours. It has been well said—"Did Marshal Soult fight this battle to retain possession of the heights which he had fortified, and which commanded the town? If so, *he lost them.* Did he fight to keep possession of Toulouse? If so, *he lost that.*"* Or, again, take the words of another British officer who has a superstition for Buonaparte, and who is ever inclined rather to extol the bravery and skill of the French than to decry them: "He (Wellington) desired to pass the Garonne, and he did pass

* Lord Burghersh, 'Narrative.'

it; he desired to win the position and works of Mont Rave, and he did win them; he desired to enter Toulouse, and he did enter it as a conqueror at the head of his troops." * We have Marshal Soult's own words for the fact that he did intend to keep possession of the heights, to fight a battle for them, and to keep possession of Toulouse, cost him what it might; and we have also his own words for the other fact, that, after he had fought the battle, he found that he had lost the heights, that he could not keep the town, and that nothing was left him but a quick retreat. And if a quick retreat, and the loss of 1,600 prisoners, of three general officers, and of cannon and stores, are good proofs of victory, Soult's victory of Toulouse may remain unquestioned.

To remove any doubt as to the meaning of Soult's words, I subjoin them, literally translated into English.

On the 7th of April, just three days before Lord Wellington attacked him, Soult wrote to Suchet, "I am determined to fight a battle near Toulouse, whatever may be the superiority of the enemy's force. For this purpose I am fortifying a position which rests on the canal and the town, which will afford me an *entrenched* camp capable of being defended whether the enemy attacked from the side of Montaaban or from the side of Castelnaudry. I hear the Allies have entered Paris. This great misfortune confirms my determination to defend Toulouse *at all risks;* for the preservation of this city, which contains establishments of all kinds, is for us of the *very greatest importance.*" On the very evening of the battle, he wrote again to Suchet, to tell that marshal, not that he had gained a victory, but that the battle had completely overset all his determinations. "The battle," said Soult, "which I announced to you has taken place to-day. It has been most murderous. The enemy suffered horribly, but have *succeeded in establishing themselves* in the position which I had occupied on the right of Toulouse. I do not think I can remain long in Toulouse. It may even happen that I may have to fight my way out."† And again, on the morning of the 11th, while his army was making its preparations to fly by night, Soult, who would have lessened his reverses to a rival in fame, and to a man he hated as he did Suchet, if such deception could then have been practicable, wrote to his brother marshal:—"As I intimated to you in my letter of yesterday, I find myself under the *necessity* of retiring from Toulouse, and I am *even afraid* of being

* Napier, Book xxiv. chap. 6. † Id.

forced to fight for a passage by Baziège, where the enemy has sent a column to cut me off from that communication. To-morrow I shall take a position at Villefranche [*twenty-four miles, be it observed, from Toulouse*], for I hope the enemy may not be able to prevent my passing. Thence I shall make for Castelnaudry [*fifteen or sixteen miles farther*]: if I shall be able to stop there, I will do so; if not, I shall take a position at Carcassonne." Carcassonne was twenty-six miles farther still, or at the respectful distance from Toulouse of sixty-five or sixty-six miles!

When an army marches twenty-two miles in one night, it is not retreat but flight. It remained for the acuteness of French philosophy to discover in a headlong flight the evidence and proof of a victory. Nor was this retreat, rapid as it was, undisturbed by the Allies. Soult was closely pursued, his rear-guard was repeatedly attacked: and he confessed himself, at the time, that in every attack it was worsted. He says that he reached Castelnaudry on the 13th, and that he was about "to continue his movement," when he received intelligence of the political events at Paris, and relaxed his efforts. But what effort could he make, what movement could he continue, except that movement of rapid retreat which he had begun on the night of the 11th.

The most recent French account of the battle that I have read is that of M. Capefigue. In general this very voluminous writer has less superstition for Buonaparte, and less prejudice and rancour against England than the vast majority of his writing confraternity; but even Capefigue clings to the Toulouse victory as if the honour and salvation of France depended upon it. He seems, however, to be sensible that plain prose and circumstantial statements will not do, for he takes refuge in a rhapsody of prose-poetry, and describes the battle as Alexander Dumas or Eugene Sue might describe a purely fictitious combat. "The day of April, sad but glorious date for Toulouse! The cannon roars; Lord Wellington attacks the French entrenched on a line of three leagues. Marshal Soult leads with him generals of the first order, Clausel, d'Armagnac, Rey, Villate; he is alone; Suchet has not joined him. It is a day of manœuvres [*there were no manœuvres at all, for none were necessary, the Allies merely marching up to attack the enemy's fixed positions*]; the losses on both sides are considerable, some of the French lines are carried [*all their positions were carried*]; the ground is littered

with the dead. On the morrow, the 11th, the Allies under Lord Wellington recommence the battle, [*the Allies did nothing of the sort, for the battle was finished on the* 10*th, and Soult, by lying close in Toulouse, gave Wellington no opportunity of attacking him, humanity and good policy alike forbidding his lordship to bombard the city, or even to make an assault upon the town, where friendly or peaceful citizens might have been exposed to as much danger as the Buonapartist troops*]. During three days, Marshal Soult intrepidly defends his entrenched camp at Toulouse. [*He was driven from that entrenched camp in one day, the* 10*th; on the second day there was no fighting for the reason aforesaid, and on the third day he was at Castelnaudry, thirty-nine or forty miles from Toulouse.*] He only evacuates his positions step by step, and on account of the news which reaches him from Paris. [*Soult tells us himself that the Paris news had no effect upon him nor his movements until he reached Castelnaudry, and the positions had all been evacuated three days before that.*] This battle, which took the name of Toulouse, is one of the most glorious souvenirs of Marshal Soult: it has created a military confraternity between him and the Duke of Wellington."*

Some few French officers, who were present in the battle, have, however, left upon record their frank soldierlike confessions that, though their positions were admirable and bravely defended, the day was, beyond contradiction, lost by Soult: according to Colonel la Pene, the battle was considered as lost as soon as Marshal Beresford carried the first redoubt on the French right, an achievement which was performed very early in the day. "This irreparable loss," says the French colonel, an eye-witness and a combatant, "was a thunderstroke to us! We could not at first believe in so great a misfortune; we saw all of a sudden our hopes destroyed, and we abandoned the prospect of a victory which before seemed so certain."

Thousands of the combatants, officers and men, French and English, Spaniards and Portuguese, are yet living to bear testimony (if truth be in the French portion of these survivors) to the scrupulous veracity of Lord Wellington's dispatch; and there are living many hundreds upon hundreds of the inhabitants of Toulouse, who saw from the windows and the roof-tops of their houses (the great part of which commanded an uninterrupted view

* L'Europe pendant le Consulat et l'Empire, Paris, 1840.

of the scene of carnage) how the battle began and how it ended, how redoubt was carried after redoubt, position after position, how the French abandoned all the heights, and rushed into the town, which was commanded by those heights, and how they fled, at the hour of night, from Toulouse, by the only road upon which there was any chance of escape. Yet, notwithstanding all this evidence, the French continue to claim the honours of Toulouse; and the government of his late majesty Louis Philippe gave its countenance to a project for erecting on the heights which Wellington conquered a pillar or column to commemorate the glory of Marshal Soult and his army on the 10th of April 1814.*

When Soult proffered his allegiance to Louis XVIII., a line of demarcation was drawn between the two armies in the south of France; the head-quarters of Lord Wellington continuing to be at Toulouse.

On the 30th of April, at night, his lordship left Toulouse, for Paris, whither he had been summoned by Lord Castlereagh, who appreciated his political as well as his military genius, and who, more than any other minister of the crown, had supported and strengthened him in the arduous struggle in which he had been so long engaged, constantly predicting his final success. He reached the French capital on the 4th of May, and was received by Louis XVIII., and by the sovereign princes, statesmen, and generals who then crowded the French court with every mark of deference, consideration, respect, and honour. It was an assemblage of experience, wisdom, and valour, collected from every country in Europe, such as the world has not often witnessed at one time and place; but it may be said, without partiality, that the greatest man of them all was Wellington. Lord Castlereagh had recommended to the prince regent that the important office of ambassador to the court of France should be given to our great soldier. For good, straightforward, decided, honest diplomacy (the only diplomacy worth anything in the end), he was eminently qualified by nature, by mature reflection, and by experience both in Asia and in Europe; but he modestly told Viscount Castlereagh, that, though obliged and flattered by the new situation given to him, he doubted his own qualifications. "I hope, however," said he, "that the

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III. 'Quarterly Review,' vol. 72. In this excellent review article, the whole of the vexed question about the battle of Toulouse is discussed and set at rest. I have seen no French attempt at refutation worth a moment's notice.

prince regent, his government, and your lordship, are convinced that I am ready to serve in any situation in which it may be thought that I can be of any service. Although I have been so long absent from England, I should have remained as much longer if it had been necessary; and I feel no objection to another absence in the public service, if it be necessary or desirable."*

Whilst staying at Paris, he received from the prime minister of England, intimation that he had been advanced to an English dukedom, and that peerages had been conferred on his brave companions, Sir John Hope, Sir Thomas Graham, Sir Stapleton Cotton, Sir Rowland Hill, and Sir W. C. Beresford. In a letter dated Paris, 9th of May, he returned his thanks to the Earl of Liverpool, in his usual quiet, brief way, showing that he felt more pleasure at the honours conferred on his "gallant coadjutors," than at his own elevation. In the same letter he intimated that he intended to make a journey into Spain. "I purpose," said he, "to go to Madrid in order to try whether I cannot prevail upon all parties to be more moderate, and to adopt a constitution more likely to be practicable and to contribute to the peace and happiness of the nation. I am afraid that I shall not be in England till the end of June; but I hope I shall be able to do much good by this journey. A very short time in England will enable me to settle all that I have to do there."†

The Duke!—he had been for some time a Spanish duke and a Portuguese duke, and had received the insignia of every distinguished Order in Europe—quitted Paris on the 10th of May, and, passing four days with his army at Toulouse, he repaired to Madrid, where he arrived on the 24th, to receive fresh honours which he cared not for, and to give an infinitude of excellent advice, which the Spaniards were not wise and cool enough to follow. The factions were infuriated against each other. The liberals wanted to maintain the impracticable ultra-democratic constitution which they had manufactured at Cadiz; the royalists would have no constitution at all, but only a repristination of the old absolute monarchy. Neither would yield an inch or enter into any compromise; and the *liberales*, being the weaker, were crushed. The peasantry and the mass of the people, whether in towns or in the country, were devotedly attached to the restored Ferdinand, and abhorred the name of the Cortes.

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi. † Id. vol. xii. p. 4.

The Duke found that nothing could be more popular than the king and his measures, as far as they had gone, to the overthrow of the Cadiz constitution; and that, though some thought it an unnecessary and impolitic measure, the arrest of the Liberals was liked by the people at large. Seventy members of the Cortes seceded at once, and presented a memorial to Ferdinand, in which they solemnly protested against sundry harsh measures of that house, directed against the sovereign, as having been carried by force and intimidation. To the Duke of San Carlos, and others, Wellington urged the necessity of governing upon moderate and more liberal principles. But of moderation the Spaniards knew nothing, and the formation of any rational constitution was, for the time, a sheer impracticability. Men there were, about the court of Madrid, who entertained the most extravagant expectations, and the idea that they could all be realized, and that Spain might resume the foremost position she had held among nations at the time of the Emperor Charles V., by throwing herself into the arms of France, and by making an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the restored Bourbon dynasty of that country. They even talked of a war with England as a possible contingency. They were to recover all their revolted colonies in South America, and to shut all their ports against British trade. "It is quite obvious to me," said the Duke of Wellington, "that, unless we can turn them from their schemes, they will throw themselves into the arms of the French, *coute qui coute;* and I am anxious for the early settlement of all these points, because we have now the ball at our foot. . . But the fact is, that there are no public men in this country who are acquainted either with the interests or the wishes of the country; and they are so slow in their motions that it is impossible to do anything with them." *

Before quitting the Spanish capital, the Duke drew up the following remarkable diplomatic paper.

MEMORANDUM TO HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY, FERDINAND VII., KING OF SPAIN.

"The Spanish nation having been engaged for six years in one of the most terrible and disastrous contests by which any nation was ever afflicted, its territory having been entirely occupied by the enemy, the country torn to pieces by internal divisions, its ancient constitution having been de-

* Letter to Viscount Castlereagh, Madrid June 1st. 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. pp. 37-40.

stroyed, and vain attempts made to establish a new one; its marine, its commerce, and revenue, entirely annihilated; its colonies in a state of rebellion, and nearly lost to the mother country; it becomes a question for serious consideration, what line of policy should be adopted by his Majesty upon his happy restoration to his throne and authority.

"In considering this question, I shall lay aside all national partialities and prejudices; and I shall go so far as to admit, what neither his Majesty nor the people of Spain will be disposed to admit, that the conduct which Great Britain has held during the war is to be put entirely out of the question, and that his Majesty has the right, not only in fact, but in justice, to choose between the lines of policy and alliance which may be offered to his acceptance.

"The restoration of the ancient government in France is certainly a new feature in the political situation of the whole world; and it is but fair to give due weight to this event in a consideration of the affairs of Spain.

"Spain, like Great Britain, is essentially confined within what may be called its natural limits. His Majesty cannot hope to hold a dominion beyond those limits for any length of time, or to possess an influence which the natural strength of his government would not otherwise give him. In the last century, by a particular chain of circumstances, Spain was enabled to establish a part of the royal family in Italy. But, however close the relationship still existing between the reigning house in Spain and those branches of it, they have been of but little use to Spain in the various wars which have occurred, since that period, in the last and present centuries. Those powers, like others, have necessarily followed the system which best suited their own interests, and have adhered to Spain only in the instances in which this adhesion was likely to be beneficial to themselves. This is owing to the peninsular situation of Spain, and affords the strongest practical proofs how little it suits the interests of Spain to push political objects beyond the boundary of her natural limits. If this were not true, it will be admitted that the first object for every national government to attend to is the internal interests of the country under its charge; and this object is to be preferred doubly when, as it happens, the state of Europe at the moment renders probable a long peace.

"There is no doubt, then, that the objects of his Majesty will be the amelioration of the internal situation of his kingdom, the restoration of its marine, its commerce, and revenue, and the settlement of its colonies.

"Supposing France, under its new government, to be more capable or better disposed than Great Britain to forward his Majesty's objects abroad, which may be doubted, it remains to be seen which of the powers is most likely to forward the objects of his internal government, and to enable him to restore his monarchy to its ancient splendour.

"France, like all the other nations of Europe, has suffered considerably by the war, and is now but little capable of giving his Majesty the assistance which he requires for the attainment of any of the objects for which assistance is wanted.

"Notwithstanding the restoration of the ancient government in France, this country will not easily forget the injuries which it has received from the French armies; and the unpopularity which will attend an alliance with France, connected, as it probably will be, with a dereliction of the alliance with Great Britain, will greatly increase the difficulties of his Majesty's situation.

"The revival of the commerce of Spain is an object of the utmost importance, not only for the people but for the government itself; but there is no doubt that the commerce with the richer country (Great Britain), will be far more profitable than that with the poorer, particularly in those articles in which consist principally the riches of Spain. The cheapness also, and goodness, in respect to their price, of all the manufactures of Great Britain, are an additional inducement to prefer them, as they will bear on importation larger duties than those of any other country.

"But the principal object for the attention of the king's government, at the present moment, is the settlement of the colonies. The only mode of effecting any desirable arrangement is, that the Spanish government should open themselves entirely upon the question, and come to a clear understanding with Great Britain.

"It may be depended upon, that if Spain is cordially and intimately connected with Great Britain, the British ministry are too well acquainted with the interests of their country to think of risking their connection with Spain for a little more of the trade to the Spanish colonies in America.

"They may be of opinion that, under existing circumstances, it is desirable for Spain to alter the nature of her connection with her colonies, and to hold them as dependent or federated states, rather than as colonies; and they may wish that the king's subjects should participate in the sup-

posed benefits of this commerce; but they cannot oppose the right which the Spanish government have to make such arrangements upon these points as they may think most beneficial to their own interests; and, a good understanding once established, Great Britain will cordially support those arrangements to the utmost of her power.

"But besides those difficulties which must occur in the settlement with the colonies, from the want of a firm alliance and good understanding with the British Government on that subject, which may be attributed to his Majesty's subjects, there are others of far greater magnitude, which are to be attributed to the United States. It will not be denied that, in the existing state of the finances of Spain and of her marine, his Majesty could not hope to coerce the government of the United States, either to do his Majesty justice in regard to parts of his territories in America, which they have unjustifiably seized, or to refrain from aiding and abetting the rebellion of his subjects in the colonies. These objects can be effected only by the interference of the British Government; and it may be depended upon, that, however interested Great Britain may be to prevent the growth of the power of the United States, the British ministers will not increase the difficulties of their peace with that power by introducing into the negotiations questions on Spanish interest, if there should not be a clear and decided understanding between his Majesty and the Prince Regent on all points, not only regarding America, but Europe, and that they should be quite certain, that, under no circumstances, will Great Britain again see Spain in alliance with her rivals in Europe, or in the ranks of her enemies.

"It appears, then, that all the domestic interests of Spain are most likely to be promoted by a good understanding, and cementing the alliance with Great Britain; and the more minutely this part of the subject is viewed, the more clearly will it appear that such understanding is desirable, if not necessary, to Spain.

"The finances of Spain are in the utmost disorder; the revenue is unproductive, if not nearly destroyed, and is, at all events, quite unequal to the expenses. But before those expenses can even be reduced by the reduction of the military establishment, and even if the government had credit, there is but little money in the country which could be borrowed as a resource. England alone can be looked to for assistance in this respect.

"It cannot be expected, however, that the British Govern-

ment will come forward with the resources of the British nation to aid his Majesty, if they are not certain of the line of policy which his Majesty will adopt both in America and in Europe; neither will it be in their power to give that aid which every well-wisher of his Majesty would wish to see afforded, if he should not at an early period carry into execution his gracious promises made to his subjects in his decree of the 4th May; and if some steps should not be taken to prove to the world the necessity and justice of the numerous arrests which attended his Majesty's restoration to his throne, or for the release of the innocent, and the judicial trial of the guilty.

"All nations are interested in these measures, but Great Britain in particular; and the nature of the British constitution, and the necessity which the government are under of guiding their measures in a great degree by the wishes and sentiments of the people, must prevent them from giving aid to his Majesty in money, or from giving countenance to the endeavours which may be made to raise money by loan in England, at least till the world shall be convinced by experience of the sincerity of his Majesty's professions in regard to his own subjects, and of his desire to unite his interests with those of the British Government.

"Great Britain is materially interested in the prosperity and greatness of Spain, and a good understanding and close alliance with Spain is highly important to her, and she will make sacrifices to obtain it, and there is no act of kindness which may not be expected from such an ally; but it cannot be expected from Great Britain that she will take any steps for the firm establishment of a government which she shall see in the fair way of connecting itself with her rival, and of eventually becoming her enemy: like other nations, she must, by prudence and foresight, provide for her own interests by other modes, if circumstances should prevent his Majesty from connecting himself with Great Britain, as it appears by the reasoning in this memorandum is desirable to him.*"

Madrid, 1814.

He strongly urged upon the Spanish government the propriety of rewarding such of the Spanish officers as had behaved meritoriously during the war; he generously and ardently supported the claims of various ecclesiastics and civilians who had rendered important services, and made

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. pp. 40-45.

great sacrifices for their country, and, as a last bequest, he drew up and gave to the Minister at War an admirable paper on the organization of the Spanish troops.

The Duke left Madrid on the 5th of June. On the 10th of that month he was again with his army, which, with the exception of some divisions previously embarked for the purpose of carrying war into the interior of the United States of America, was collected at Bordeaux, in order to evacuate France, according to the treaty of Paris. For the last time he passed those gallant bands in review. He then drew up admirable arrangements for the orderly embarkation of the troops. On the 14th of June he finally took leave of the army, leaving General the Earl of Dalhousie to superintend the embarkation of the infantry; the cavalry marching through the heart of France to embark at ports on the British channel.

His order of thanks is very remarkable "for the contrast which it presents to those inflated addresses by which the vanity and the passions of Buonaparte's soldiers were flattered and nourished."*

"Adjutant-General's Office,
"G. O. Bordeaux, 14th of June, 1814.

"The Commander of the Forces, being upon the point of returning to England, takes this opportunity of congratulating the army upon the recent events which have restored peace to their country and to the world.

"The share which the British army has had in producing those events, and the high character with which the army will quit this country, must be equally satisfactory to every individual belonging to it, as they are to the Commander of the Forces; and he trusts that the troops will continue the same good conduct to the last.

"The Commander of the Forces once more requests the army to accept his thanks.

"Although circumstances may alter the relations in which he has stood towards them for some years so much to his satisfaction, he assures them he will never cease to feel the warmest interest in their welfare and honour; and that he will be at all times happy to be of any service to those to whose conduct, discipline, and gallantry, their country is so much indebted.

(Signed) "E. M. Pakenham, A. G.†"

* Captain M. Sherer, 'Military Memoir.'
† 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 62.

The duke landed at Dover on the 23rd of June, under a salute from the batteries. Although it was at a very early hour in the morning, a great concourse of mariners and other people assembled on the beach, and the instant his lordship set his foot on shore they resolved to carry him in triumph to the Ship Hotel; and, as there was no escaping this not very convenient honour, he was borne from the beach to the house on the shoulders of some of the Dover men, all the rest following with shouts and cheers which made the walls of the ancient castle and Shakespeare's cliff ring and re-echo. He proceeded instantly to London. In crossing Westminster Bridge, and driving up Parliament Street, he was recognised and welcomed by the heartiest shouts that ever proceeded from an English populace. After a short interview with his family, he hastened to Portsmouth. Here the Prince Regent received him with every possible demonstration of respect and cordial affection. These distinctions gave him honour, not only before England, but in the face of Europe; for the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia were at that period the guests of the Regent, and the court was crowded with illustrious warriors and statesmen from all parts of the continent.

Upon the 28th of June, the Duke of Wellington, for the first time, took his seat in the House of Lords. The peers assembled in great numbers to do honour to his introduction. He appeared in a field-marshal's uniform, with the insignia of the Garter, and was introduced to the House by the Dukes of Beaufort and Richmond. He had left his native country, five years before, a commoner; those years he had passed entirely in foreign countries, and mostly in camps; and now, at his first appearance in the upper house, his various patents of baron, viscount, earl, marquis, and duke, were read upon the same day. The Lady Mornington, the aged mother of the hero, lived to see her son obtain the highest honours that can be conferred upon a subject, and had the happiness of being present in the House of Lords on this day.

"Altius his nihil est. . . . ."

For the son there could be no higher glory upon earth; but the pleasure, the joy, the rapture, must have been greatest for the venerable and loving mother, who had so carefully watched the infancy, boyhood, and youth of the hero, and whose first lessons, the most precious and enduring of all, had contributed to form young Arthur Wellesley for greatness.

Having taken the oaths and signed the test rolls, Wellington, accompanied by his two noble supporters, took his seat on the dukes' bench. Lord Chancellor Eldon then rose, and, pursuant to their lordships' vote, pronounced the thanks and congratulations of the House. Among other things the Chancellor said:—"I cannot forbear to call the especial attention of all who hear me to a fact in your grace's life, singular, I believe, in the history of the country, and infinitely honourable to your grace, that you have manifested, upon your first entrance into this House, your right, under various grants, to all the dignities in the peerage of this realm which the Crown can confer. These dignities have been conferred at various periods, but in the short compass of little more than four years, for great public services, occurring in rapid succession, claiming the favour of the Crown, influenced by its sense of justice to your grace and the country; and on no one occasion in which the Crown has thus rewarded your merits, have the Houses of Parliament been inattentive to your demands upon the gratitude of the country. Upon all such occasions they have offered to your grace their acknowledgments and thanks, the highest honours they could bestow.

"I decline all attempts to state your grace's eminent merits in your military character — to represent those brilliant actions, those illustrious achievements, which have attached immortality to the name of Wellington, and which have given to this country a degree of glory unexampled in the annals of this kingdom. In thus acting, I believe I best consult the feelings which evince your grace's title to the character of a truly great and illustrious man. . . . . I presume not to trespass upon the House by representing the personal satisfaction which I have derived from being the honoured instrument of conveying to your grace the acknowledgments and thanks of this House upon every occasion upon which they have been offered to your grace, or by endeavouring to represent the infinite gratification which I enjoy, in presenting to your grace in person these acknowledgments and those thanks. Your grace is now called to aid hereafter, by your wisdom and judgment, the great council of that nation, to the peace, prosperity, and glory of which your grace has already so essentially contributed; and I tender your grace, now taking your seat in this House, in obedience to its commands, the thanks of the House, in the words of its resolution:—'That the thanks of this House be given to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wel-

lington, on his return from his command abroad, for his eminent and unremitting service to his Majesty and to the public.'"*

The duke's reply was short, modest, and dignified; but he did not fail to call attention to the valour and exertions of the army he had commanded.

The House of Commons, who had voted 500,000*l.* for the support of his dignity, also passed a vote of thanks, and appointed a deputation to wait upon his grace with it. On the 1st of July, the duke went to the Lower House to deliver his reply: when, in the usual manner and etiquette, it was announced that the Duke of Wellington was in attendance, and when the Speaker put the question, "Is it the pleasure of the House that his grace be called in?" a loud and universal "Aye"! rang through the hall. On his entrance, all the members uncovered, rose, and enthusiastically cheered him.

The duke spoke to the following effect:—"Mr. Speaker, I was anxious to be permitted to attend this House, in order to return my thanks in person for the honour they have done me, in deputing a committee of their members to congratulate me on my return to this country; and this, after the House had animated my exertions by their applause upon every occasion which appeared to merit their approbation, and after they had filled up the measure of their favour by conferring upon me, at the recommendation of the Prince Regent, the noblest gift that any subject had been known to have received. I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous in me to take this opportunity of expressing my admiration of the great efforts made by this House and the country at a moment of unexampled pressure and difficulty, in order to support the great scale of operations by which the contest was brought to so favourable a termination. By the wise policy of Parliament, the Government was enabled to give the necessary support to the operations which were carried on under my direction; and I was encouraged, by the confidence reposed in me by his Majesty's ministers, and by the Commander-in-chief, by the gracious favour of his royal highness the Prince Regent, and by the reliance which I had on the support of my gallant friends, the general officers of the army, and on the bravery of the officers and troops, to carry on the operations in such a manner as to acquire for me those marks of the approbation of this House

* 'Annual Register,' for the year 1814.

for which I have now the honour to make my humble acknowledgments. Sir, it is impossible for me to express the gratitude which I feel; I can only assure the House, that I shall always be ready to serve his Majesty in any capacity in which my services can be deemed useful, with the same zeal for my country which has already acquired for me the approbation of this House."*

This speech was received with loud cheers, at the end of which the Speaker, who had sat covered during its delivery, rose, and thus addressed his grace:—"My Lord,—Since last I had the honour of addressing you from this place, a series of eventful years has elapsed; but none without some mark and note of your rising glory.

"The military triumphs which your valour has achieved, upon the banks of the Douro and the Tagus, of the Ebro and the Garonne, have called forth the spontaneous shouts of admiring nations. These triumphs it is needless on this day to recount. Their names have been written by your conquering sword in the annals of Europe, and we shall hand them down with exultations to our children's children.

"It is not, however, the grandeur of military success which has alone fixed our admiration, or commanded our applause; it has been that generous and lofty spirit which inspired your troops with unbounded confidence, and taught them to know that the day of battle was always a day of victory; that moral courage and enduring fortitude, which in perilous times, when gloom and doubt had beset ordinary minds, stood, neverthless, unshaken; and that ascendancy of character which, uniting the energies of jealous and rival nations, enabled you to wield at will the fate and fortunes of mighty empires.

"For the repeated thanks and grants bestowed upon you by this House, in gratitude for your many and eminent services, you have thought fit this day to offer us your acknowledgments; but this nation well knows that it is still largely your debtor. It owes to you the proud satisfaction, that, amidst the constellation of illustrious warriors who have recently visited our country, we could present to them a leader of our own, to whom all, by common acclamation, conceded the pre-eminence; and when the will of Heaven, and the common destinies of our nature, shall have swept away the present generation, you will have left your great name an imperishable monument, exciting others to like deeds of glory, and serving at once to adorn, defend, and

* 'Annual Register.'

perpetuate the existence of this country amongst the ruling nations of the earth.

"It now remains only, that we congratulate your grace upon the high and important mission* on which you are about to proceed, and we doubt not that the same splendid talents so conspicuous in war will maintain, with equal authority, firmness, and temper, our national honour and interests in peace."†

His grace then withdrew; and all the members rising again, he was reconducted by the serjeant-at-arms to the door of the House. After he was gone, his warm friend Lord Castlereagh moved, that what the Duke had said on returning thanks, together with the Speaker's answer, should be printed in the votes, which was agreed to *nem. con.*

On the 7th July a national thanksgiving was held at St. Paul's Cathedral for the restoration of the blessings of peace. It was observed with all the state and solemnity then usual on such occasions. In the procession from Carlton House to the church, the Duke rode in the same carriage with the Regent, sitting on his right hand. And it was during this procession that I, then a youth, saw for the first time that person and face which once seen can never be forgotten. As a schoolboy I had rejoiced at every victory as soon as the news of his winning it reached England; from the battle of Vimeiro down to the glorious victory at Toulouse, I had celebrated them all with boyish glee, and shouts and cap in the air, and with a rapidly ascending and increasing admiration and enthusiasm for our great Captain.

> Lives there a strain, whose sounds of mounting fire
> May rise distinguished o'er the din of war;
> Or died it with you master of the lyre,
> Who sung beleaguer'd Ilion's evil star?
> Such, Wellington, might reach thee from afar,
> Wafting its descant wide o'er ocean's range.‡

Fast as he had been winning them, I would have had the duke gain still more victories. It was a dull year that did not bring to our school three bright holidays and three great bonfires. And older heads than mine were equally excited during the last years of this war. Those who lived in London, or in its neighbourhood, in the years 1812 and 1813, can never wholly forget the popular enthusiasm which prevailed, as month by month, and, at last, week by week,

* The Embassy to France. † 'Annual Register' for 1814.
‡ Walter Scott, 'Vision of Don Roderick.'

tidings of some fresh victories obtained by Wellington, or Kutusoff, Wittgenstein, Bulow, Blucher, or Schwartzenberg, reached the metropolis—can never forget the scenes presented at the illuminations and rejoicings for the battles of Salamanca, Vittoria, and the Pyrenees. The shouts and cheers of that million of English voices still ring in my ears; and I still see the captured glittering French eagles as they were displayed to the public gaze in Downing-street; and, although thirty-seven long years have passed since then, I am still thrilled by those sounds and by that sight. The heart is cold and un-English, that, with the same recollections, has not the same feelings. But now, assuredly, men's hearts seem colder, and their minds more prosaic and statistical, than in the days of good King George III.! The tendency of our modern philosophy, or of the systems or theories which assume the name of philosophy, is not merely to obviate war, but to cast discredit, ridicule, and contempt on all military glory and martial achievements, wanting which, no nation ever was or ever will be great or even free. A higher influence than this philosophism regulates the affairs of this world—a world which was never meant to be a paradise, or the happy abode of always peaceful spirits. It is Scripture that tells us, that so long as this world exists, there shall be wars and rumours of wars.

> Man! art thou more than *He* whose name is Love
> And Peace? And dost thou place thy will above
> *Him*, the descended, who will come in time
> To purge this earth of folly, blood, and crime?
> Await that day! Be modest, faithful, true!
> That which the Gospel doth not, canst thou do?
> For twice nine hundred years the world hath rung,
> With all the truth from inspiration's tongue;
> But say, have hate and strife on earth been stilled?
> Hath not the world with constant wars been filled?
> War and its rumours—this our present doom. . . . .*

Let us make every exertion to diminish this in common with all the other evils which flesh is heir to; but let us never lose the martial spirit of our forefathers; for, as sure as night succeeds to day, war will come again, and if that spirit is gone, *all* is lost. It was not a soldier but a peaceful minister of the gospel who said these words:—

"Unfortunately for man, it is the sword which decides the fate of nations, secures their tranquillity, and promotes their aggrandizement; it is the sword alone which is the

* 'The Peace Congress.'

guardian of national honour, and the protector of public and private happiness. Commerce may enrich, the arts may civilize, science may illuminate a people; but these blessings can only owe their safety and stability to military force. War, therefore, to the regret of every milder virtue, must form the principal subject of history." *

BOOK IV.

Upon the 8th of August the Duke of Wellington left town for the Continent, as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Court of France. In his way to Paris, he visited the Netherlands, and, in company with the brave Prince of Orange, he carefully examined the frontier fortresses upon that line—a barrier against the French erected by our great William III., improved at an enormous cost after the duke's visit in 1814, and swept away by the political arrangements which followed the French revolution of July 1830. For a long space of time his grace paid an annual visit to those fortresses.

On the 24th of August, the duke was presented to Louis XVIII., delivered his credentials, and took up his residence in Paris.†

Under a deceptive appearance of quiet and contentment, an immense conspiracy was at work for the restoration of Buonaparte, who had cost France such torrents of blood and, in the end, so much disgrace, for the flood of invasion had returned upon her, and English, Austrians, Russians, and Prussians had, among them, held possession of her fairest cities, and of the capital itself.

"The principles and feelings of revolutionised France were of twenty years' growth. The youth of France, it is true, knew little of the revolution or of the republic, but of the Bourbons they knew nothing. They had been for the most part educated in military schools; had lived under a martial autocracy, and had imbibed a military spirit.

"There were now scattered over the country numbers of

* 'History of the House of Austria.' By William Coxe, Archdeacon of Wilts and Rector of Pemberton. Vol. i. Preface, p. 5. Bohn's Edition of 1847.

† 'Dispatches,' vol. xii.

disbanded and retired officers and soldiers, who had marched and fought under the imperial eagles. These men, who had been for the most part engaged in wars of aggression, amid changes of scene and chances of plunder, were miserable under their new and narrow circumstances. Their habits were roving and reckless, and they could not endure a stationary dwelling and peaceful occupations. With all such of the old army as had been retained under the new government, it was as bad or worse. They looked back upon their stern and warlike emperor as the soldier's friend, and they despised the unambitious and peaceful Louis. They hated the inactivity and the discipline of garrisons and barracks, and they panted for the field and the bivouac. They thought only of the excitement and the rewards of warfare, not upon its sufferings or its horrors—of victory, not of defeat—of glory, not of the grave."*

But so secretly were the machinations carried on, that the Duke of Wellington, in common with all the corps diplomatique, was led to believe that the government of Louis XVIII. was daily becoming more popular. He saw his Majesty received with acclamations and enthusiastic applause, as well by the troops as by the people.† He knew the amiable disposition, the enlightenment, and the pure intentions of that prince; and he hoped that his subjects would not soon forget the lessons which adversity had taught them. With good advice the duke was ever ready to supply his Majesty and his ministers, some of whom were but imperfectly acquainted with the methods of carrying on a government upon constitutional principles; and, instead of the absolute tyranny of the soldier of fortune, France had now a free and a good constitution under the Bourbon prince.

That the duke was admirably qualified for diplomacy was acknowledged by all who had business with him at Paris, and may be sufficiently proved by referring to such of his dispatches of this period as have been published. He was accessible at all hours, and always patient, courteous, frank, and plain-spoken. It was a veteran in diplomacy, a long practised member of the Russian legations, the Prince Rasomowsky, who told me, many years after this time, that there was never any manœuvring or mystery about the duke; that in every conference he spoke as plainly and as simply as if he were speaking to his officers at a mess-table;

* Captain M. Sherer, 'Military Memoir of the Duke.'

† Letter to Viscount Castlereagh, 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 99.

that there was no possibility of misunderstanding him; that he put more meaning into a dozen words than most trained diplomatists could put in three score; and that whether the conference ended agreeably to the wishes of those who had sought it, or called it, or far otherwise, there was no leaving the duke without an increase of personal good-will and esteem.

"The sure way to make a foolish ambassador," says Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "is to bring him up to it. What can an English minister abroad really want, but an honest and bold heart, a love for his country and the ten commandments? Your *art* diplomatic is stuff!"*

On the 23rd of January 1815, the duke took leave of Louis XVIII., and on the following day he set out for Vienna to attend the general congress of the European powers, assembling in that capital. Here he was brought in contact with the most experienced diplomatists and statesmen of Europe. Austria was represented by Prince Metternich, and the Baron de Wessenberg; France, by Prince Talleyrand, the Duke de Dalberg, Latour du Pin, and the Count Alexis de Noailles; Great Britain, by Wellington, Lord Cathcart, Clancarty, and Sir Charles Stuart; Portugal, by the accomplished Count de Palmella; Prussia, by Prince Hardenberg and Baron Humboldt; Russia, by the Counts Rasomowsky, Stackelberg, and Nesselrode; Sweden, by Lowenhielm; and Spain, by Labrador; and again our great Captain was recognized as the clearest of heads and the best of diplomatists.

While thus engaged at Vienna, the duke, on the 7th of March, received from Lord Burghersh the first intelligence that Buonaparte had quitted the island of Elba, with all his civil and military officers, and about 1200 troops, on the 26th of February.† He immediately communicated this account to the Emperors of Austria and Prussia, and to the ministers of the different powers, and he found among all one prevailing sentiment,—a determination to unite their efforts to support the system established by the peace of Paris in 1814.‡ On the 13th of March, the very moment it was known that Buonaparte had landed in France, the ministers of the eight allied powers, including the ministers of the King of France, signed the solemn declaration of their sentiments and intentions.

* 'Table Talk,' vol. ii. p. 258.
† 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 266.
‡ Dispatch to Viscount Castlereagh, vol. xii. p. 266.

lands were not to be trusted either for valour and discipline or for fidelity; many of our British troops were young, and had never been under fire; many of the Peninsula veterans were away in America; and, instead of 150 British guns, the duke could never muster more than eighty-four, including Dutch and German pieces. While Buonaparte's people were all of one nation, and speaking one tongue, the duke's people were drawn from six or seven different nations, and his camp was a Babel of languages and dialects. Some of the Prussians, as well as the Belgians, were not very amenable to orders; and Wellington told Prince Hardenberg, as he had previously told the Spanish government, that he was entirely indifferent whether he had many or few foreign troops under his orders, but that those who were under his command must obey him.*

During the months of April and May, Buonaparte, by great exertions, collected near the frontiers of Flanders an army of about 125,000 men, chiefly veteran troops, of whom 25,000 were cavalry, and 350 pieces of artillery. On the night of the 11th of June, he quitted Paris to open the campaign. His countenance, which had long been clouded, brightened up as he sprang into his carriage, and as he said, or as he is reported to have said, "*Je vais me mesurer avec ce Villainton.*"† (I am going to measure myself with this Wellington). On the 14th of June he and his army pressed on the Belgian frontier, and on the very next day the long stern conflict began.

The duke's head-quarters were at Brussels, which it was Buonaparte's first great object to gain, and the possession of which would have given him immense advantages, moral and political, as well as military. On the duke's left lay Marshal Blucher with the Prussian army, estimated (after the junction of Bulow's corps) at about 80,000 men. The brave old marshal was well supplied with artillery, he having 200 cannon; but, unluckily, his artillerymen were not very good, and he had to complain of the manner in which his guns were served when the French fell upon him.

Blucher's head-quarters continued to be at Namur. The two armies were, of necessity, spread over a wide extent of country. The Duke of Wellington's had to preserve its communications with England, Holland, and Germany, to

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 345.

† The French, who could never pronounce the duke's name, found a pleasure in so maiming it as to give it an odious signification.

be near enough to connect readily with the Prussian army, and to protect Brussels. Blucher's army had to preserve its communications with the country in its rear and on its left, through which the reinforcements of the Grand Allied Armies were to advance; it had to give the hand to Wellington, and at the same time it had to watch a long extent of frontier; and on that north-east frontier of France there were many strong fortresses, which enabled Buonaparte to mask his movements, and to attack wherever he chose, without letting his attack be foreseen by his enemy. In front of the extended lines of the British, and their immediate coadjutors, the Hanoverians, Brunswickers, &c., there were, besides country by-roads, no fewer than four great roads (paved roads, proper for the passage of artillery, and for all military purposes); and it was *because* there were all these roads leading from the French frontier and the French fortresses, and *because* the Duke of Wellington could not possibly foresee by which of these roads the French might choose to advance, that part of his forces were widely spread in order to watch them all, while the remainder of his army was kept in hand in order to be thrown upon whatsoever point the attack should be made at. These men were every way better in and round Brussels than they would have been if cantoned or bivouacked on the high roads; and the artillery was also better there, for of this arm the duke had not to spare; it was indispensable that he should have it all on the field of battle, and embracing all the possible lines by which the French might attack, he had, where it stood, the best means of moving it rapidly to any one of these lines. Had the guns been all collected at one point in advance of Brussels, and had the enemy attacked at another point, the guns could not have been so easily moved. If, as some commanders might have done, the duke had kept his troops marching and counter-marching from road to road, from point to point, he would very uselessly have wasted the strength and spirit of his men before the battle arrived. But this is just one of the things which Wellington never did; and hence his men had always been up to their work when the work was to be done. Concentration of force is the finest of all things in war, in its proper place; but there are cases in which the idea of concentration is an absurdity. If, as he had once hoped, the Duke of Wellington had been enabled to commence operations by acting on the offensive, then he would have attacked Buonaparte on the French

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frontier in one or two condensed masses; and then Buonaparte, not knowing where the attack would be made, must have had his army stretched out in lines along that frontier, having merely reserved to himself (as Wellington did) the best plan and the best means of concentration to be effected when and where the attack should be made. But the duke had not received the accession of strength which might have been given to him; the grand army of Prince Schwartzenberg had not yet crossed the Rhine; and with none but Blucher to co-operate with him, it would indeed have been rash to attack a frontier covered with numerous and well garrisoned fortresses, or to invade France, where an army of reserve was collecting to support Buonaparte. I trust that these few words will enable the reader to understand the absurd charge that the duke was not only out-manœuvred and out-generaled, but actually taken by surprise.*

It was on the 15th of June that Buonaparte crossed the Sambre, and advanced upon Charleroi. At sunset on the preceding evening, all had been quiet upon the frontier, and nothing had been observed by the Prussian outposts. Being attacked just as day was dawning, those outposts fell back, and then a report was sent to the duke, who issued his orders for holding his troops in readiness to march. But it was not as yet sufficiently clear that Buonaparte intended the attack upon Charleroi to be a serious one, and that he really intended to open his road to Brussels by the valley of the Sambre. The duke, therefore, tranquilly waited until intelligence from various quarters proved, beyond the reach of a doubt, that the advance upon Charleroi was a real move and no feint. It was useless to move, and the duke had determined all along not to move, until he got this certain and full assurance; and the information could not be obtained before the event happened, that is, before the French columns, advancing by the valley of the Sambre, were swelled to a great army—an operation which requires rather more time than is taken in the writing of a critical or rhapsodical sentence in a book. The certain and deciding information was brought to Brussels by the Prince of Orange, who had acted as aide-de-camp, and had very often "gone the pace" for our great Captain in the Peninsula. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th, and the prince found the duke at dinner at his hotel, about a hundred yards from quarters, in the park at Brussels, which he

* On this subject read a clever memorandum by Sir Francis Head in Quarterly Review, No. 143.

had taken care not to quit during the morning, or even during the preceding day.* The Prince of Orange was soon followed by the Prussian general, Mufflin, who brought accounts of the French onset.

Now that it was time to put his army in motion, Wellington put it in motion to his left. The orders for this ever-memorable march were not decided upon in a scene of merriment and festivity, and at midnight, but in the duke's hotel, and by about five o'clock in the afternoon. These orders must have reached most of the corps by eight, and probably all by ten o'clock at night. It is quite true that the duke did go to a ball that evening, and that many of his officers went as well as he, because their business for the day was done. Instead of a proof of his being taken by surprise, the duke's presence at the ball was a proof of his perfect self-possession and equanimity at the most critical moment of his whole life.† The Duchess of Richmond's ball was a gay one, and the duke and his officers were as cheerful as any part of that gay company. I know that many persons present at that ball believed that the marching orders were decided upon there; but the contrary has been proved by the writer of the memorandum which I have quoted. That old fable is, moreover, utterly at variance with the duke's memorandum for the Deputy-Quarter-Master-General, of the 15th of June, which must have been written in the afternoon, as soon as the Prince of Orange arrived at Brussels with his decisive intelligence. We also gather, from his own dispatches, that the duke's stay at the Duchess of Richmond's entertainment must have been but short; for at half-past nine o'clock in the evening we find him writing to the Duke of Berri, and at ten to a French general who had remained faithful to Louis XVIII.

About midnight, the general officers were quietly warned, and quietly disappeared from the ball-room. Shortly after the younger officers were summoned from the dance, but without any bustle.

By this time the troops at Brussels were mustering, and before the sun of the 16th of June arose, "all were marching to the field of honour, and many to an early grave." ‡

Before these columns moved, there had been some hard fighting in front. In the course of the 15th, Buonaparte had established his head-quarters at Charleroi, and Blucher

* Sir Francis Head, 'Memorandum.'

† 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of Geo. III. ‡ Sherer, 'Military Memoirs.'

had concentrated the Prussian army upon Sombref, occupying the villages of St. Amand and Ligny; and Marshal Ney, continuing his march along the road which leads from Charleroi to Brussels, had attacked (on the evening of the 15th), with his advanced guard, a brigade of the army of the Netherlands, under the Prince of Weimar, and had forced it back to a farm-house, on the road, called Quatre Bras. But the Prince of Orange had promptly reinforced Weimar's brigade, and had kept the farm-house as if it had been a fortress. The time which would allow Ney to bring up his main body, would also allow Wellington to bring up a sufficient force to checkmate the French marshal. But early on the morning of the 16th, while our troops were marching, the Prince of Orange pushed back Ney's advanced guard, and recovered some of the ground between Quatre Bras and Charleroi, which had been lost the preceding evening.

At about 2·30 P.M., Picton came up to Quatre Bras with the fifth division, and he was soon followed by the corps of the Duke of Brunswick and the troops of Nassau.

Some hours before this the Duke of Wellington had ridden across the country to confer with Marshal Blucher. At that time Ney was not in strength in front of Quatre Bras, nor was Buonaparte in strength in the immediate front of the Prussians at Ligny. But the French, having all the advantages which are inseparable from offensive movements, massed their columns of attack very quickly in Blucher's front; and, at the same time, Ney gathered his strength near Quatre Bras. The game to be played was now opened. Buonaparte was to crush the Prussian marshal, while Ney was driving in the English duke.

As the Prussian corps of General Bulow had not joined, Blucher was attacked by a force numerically superior to his own; and after making a most desperate resistance, particularly in the villages of St. Amand and Ligny, and after displaying the greatest personal bravery, old "Marshal Forwards" was obliged to go a little way back, and to quit his position at Sombref. His horse had been killed under him French cuirassiers had galloped over him as he lay on the 'ground; and, stunned and sorely bruised, he must have been taken prisoner, but for the devotion and presence of mind of Nostitz, his faithful aide-de-camp. Brave Colonel, now Viscount, Hardinge, who, for good and weighty reasons, was with Blucher's army, had his left hand shattered, and was obliged, in the course of that dismal night, to undergo

the amputation of his left arm. With a frightful loss, but still with perfect order, the Prussians retired in the course of the night upon Wavre. The French, who had suffered severely, did not pursue. But, in point of fact, there could be no pursuit, as the French did not know for some hours that there was any retreat; the Prussians not having ceased fighting until it was dark night. At daylight on the following morning (the 17th), it was seen that the Prussians were gone; but it was not until the hour of noon that Buonaparte ascertained what route Blucher had taken, and ordered General Grouchy to follow him with 32,000 men.

In the mean while, Ney had failed in his attacks upon Wellington at Quatre Bras. At a little after 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the 16th, the French marshal, having concentrated nearly 40,000 men, commenced fighting with two heavy columns of infantry, a large body of cavalry, and a numerous and well-served artillery. At that moment there were not more than 19,000 of the Allies at Quatre Bras, and of these only 4,500 were British infantry. These last forces, and the Brunswickers, were, however, not to be broken by any charge, or by any mode of attack. Our 3rd division, under General Alten, now came up, and joined Picton's unflinching 5th. Ney made another grand attack upon the left, but he was again met by impenetrable, immoveable squares of infantry, and was again repulsed. He then tried the right of the position of Quatre Bras, and advancing under cover of a little wood, and attacking in great force, he cowed some of the worst of Wellington's contingents that were posted on that right. But as these foreigners were giving way, General Cooke came up, and joined battle with part of the English guards; and the French were once more repelled. They gathered thickly in the little wood near the farm-house; but General Maitland's brigade soon cleared that wood; and then the French were seen retreating in great confusion. The conflict had been tremendous; but the duke had succeeded in his present great object, which was to prevent Ney getting between the Prussians and the British. The two great battles fought on this day were only preludes to the greater massacre at Waterloo; yet at Ligny, Blucher had lost, in killed and wounded, from 11,000 to 12,000 men, and Wellington had lost at Quatre Bras, in killed and wounded, nearly 5,000 men, besides about 200 in missing. Our loss was made up entirely of British and Brunswickers, or Hanoverians. The brave Duke of Brunswick fell fighting

gallantly at the head of his troops.* During the greater part of the combat, we had little or no artillery wherewith to respond to the heavy fire of the French; and in no part of the day had we any cavalry, except some squadrons of the black hussars of Brunswick, to oppose to Ney's immense squadrons; for 2,000 Belgian horse could never be brought to face the enemy, and when, at an early period of the action, an attempt was made to lead them to the charge they wheeled round and fled with such precipitation, that they swept the Duke of Wellington and his staff with them through Quatre Bras. These cavaliers did not again appear in the field, finding a pleasanter occupation in scampering through the towns and villages, and reporting everywhere that the English were beaten, and the French in full march for Brussels. During the battle, Ney sent off a courier to Paris with a captured regimental flag, and with the confident assurance that victory would be his. Marshal Soult did still more than this at Ligny, for falsehoods of the first magnitude were deemed necessary to give courage to the French people, and to keep Buonaparte's cause up and alive in the capital. In a dispatch to Marshal Davoust, now war-minister, Soult did not scruple to announce that the Emperor had beaten both Wellington and Blucher, and had so completely separated their two armies that there was no chance of their ever uniting them again in his front. "Wellington and Blucher," wrote Soult, "saved themselves with difficulty; the effect was theatrical; in an instant the firing ceased, and the enemy was routed in all directions." It was announced that the Emperor would enter Brussels on the 17th! Another dispatch, published in the *Moniteur*, said, "The noble lord must have been confounded! Prisoners are taken by bands; they do not know what has become of their commanders; the rout is complete on this side; and we hope to hear no more of the Prussians for some time, even if they should *ever* be able to rally. As for the English, we shall see what will become of them! The *Emperor* is *there!*"

As at Ligny, the fighting at Quatre Bras did not cease until the setting-in of night. "They fell back upon the road to Frasnes. The moon rose angrily — still a few cannon-shot were heard after daylight had departed; but gradually they ceased. The fires were lighted, and such miserable provisions as could be procured were furnished

* See 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 478-80.

to our harassed soldiery; and while strong pickets were posted in the front and flanks, the remnant of the British and their brave Allies piled arms and stretched themselves on the battle-field."* The failure of the French attacks on Quatre Bras, made by veteran troops in very superior numbers, seemed to most continental officers quite unaccountable; and Ney's apology, for what all must admit to have been a defeat, is not maintainable for a moment. Many of the Allies were raw soldiers, and being a good many miles in advance of their reserve, the supporting troops reached the ground late in the day. Ney, afterwards, excused himself at the expense of the military reputation of his master, blaming him as the cause that the 1st corps of the French army "was idly paraded between Ligny and Quatre Bras without firing a shot," while he (Ney) was contending with Wellington. The French troops had never fought with more fury or ferocity. Horse and foot, they had fallen upon our unsupported infantry, screaming—"Down with the English! No quarter! No quarter!" The Brunswickers, with their skulls and cross-bones on their caps, in commemoration of the bloody death of their former duke in battle with the French, and with the present death of that duke's son and successor, little needed such incentives; but the British troops were exasperated by the cries of the French, and were driven into an equal fury by seeing that the enemy really acted according to their words. The almost total absence of prisoners, after the battle, in the French and English camps, too clearly proves that little quarter was given on either side.

On the following morning, the 17th of June, the Duke of Wellington made a retrograde movement upon Waterloo, corresponding indeed to the retreat-movement of Blucher upon Wavre, but in strict accordance with the plan and combinations which had been previously agreed upon by him and the Prussian marshal. He retired leisurely by Genappe to the excellent ground which he had chosen, and which, many days before, he had most attentively examined. Perhaps the field of Waterloo had an additional recommendation in the eyes of the Duke of Wellington, as it had once been selected by the great Duke of Marlborough as a battle-field, and as Marlborough had been prevented from gaining a great victory over the French, upon that ground,

* Stories of Waterloo.

wholly by the stupid obstinacy of the Dutch field-commissioners, who had power to control his movements.*

Although the retiring from Quatre Bras was made in the middle of the day, the French did not attempt to molest our march, except by following with a large body of cavalry, which was brought up from the right, or from the part of Napoleon's forces which had been engaged the day before against the Prussians at Ligny. A body of their lancers charged the English cavalry, and were charged in their turn gallantly, though ineffectually, by our 7th hussars, who could make no impression on the front of their column, in the defile of Genappe. But when these lancers, elated with success, debouched on a wider space, in front of Genappe, the Earl of Uxbridge (now Marquis of Anglesey) charged them with the first regiment of Life Guards, and fairly rode over them.† There was no standing against that charge of our heavy household cavalry, on their large, powerful, and high-bred horses. In the enemy's ranks, horses and men went down, and were literally ridden over. There appears to have been no more fighting on the road.

Marshal Ney was waiting to be joined by all the forces of Napoleon which had fought Blucher at Ligny, except the 32,000 men under Grouchy, who had been ordered by the emperor to follow the Prussians, and, on no account, to quit their track. This junction took place in the course of the day and night of the 17th. That night, during which Wellington's men lay upon the wet earth, or among the dripping corn-fields, was a dreary night, with heavy rain, thunder, lightning and violent gusts of wind. A more cheerless bivouac was never occupied by an army. The men longed for the morrow.

That morrow came at last; but Sunday, the 18th of June, was but a dull day; for, though the storm ceased, the sky was overcast with clouds, through which the sun rarely broke. The position which the duke had taken up, was in front of the village of Waterloo, and crossed the high roads from Charleroi and Nivelles; it had its right thrown back to a ravine near Merke-Braine, which was occupied, and its left extended to a height above the hamlet of Ter-la-Haye, which was likewise occupied; and in front of the right centre, and near the Nivelles road, our troops held the

* Dispatches of the Duke of Marlborough, edited by the late General Sir George Murray.

† 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 480.

house and gardens of Hougoumont, which covered the return of that flank; and in front of the left centre they occupied the farm of La Haye Sainte. By our left we communicated with Marshal Blucher at Wavre, through Ohain, and the marshal had promised the duke that in case of his being attacked, he would support him with one or more corps, as might be necessary.* In the rear of the British centre, was the farm of Mont St. Jean, and a little further behind, the village of that name. The French often call the battle of Waterloo, "The massacre of Mont St. Jean."†.

The duke's force, united in the position above indicated, was 72,720 men. Of this number, including the king's German Legion, who merited to be classed with English troops, 36,273 were British, 7,447 were Hanoverians in British pay, and partly commanded by British officers, 8,000 were Brunswickers, and 21,000 were Belgian and Nassau troops, mostly of an inferior quality. There were good and brave men among the German troops that were classed under the name *Nassau;* but it is believed that the duke would have given all the truly Belgian regiments for as many companies of the Portuguese, who had become under him nearly as good soldiers as our own. Let me repeat—and let it be borne in mind—that many of the troops, British as well as foreign, had never been under fire before this campaign; while the enemy's troops were veterans almost to a man.

Buonaparte had collected his army on a range of heights in front of the British position, and not above a mile from it: his right was in advance of Planchenois, his line crossed the Charleroi road at the farm of La Belle Alliance; his left rested on the Genappe road. Behind the French the ground rose considerably, and was skirted by thick woods; in the rear of the British and their Allies, was the famed old forest of Soignies. Deducting Grouchy's 32,000 men (who were looking after Blucher), and about 13,000 for the French killed and wounded at St. Amand, Ligny, and Quatre Bras, and making a liberal allowance for stragglers, patroles, &c., the troops collected must have been at least 75,000 in number.

Early in the morning, when Buonaparte mounted his horse to survey Wellington's position, he could see but few troops. This induced him to fancy that the British general, with whom he had come to measure himself, had beaten a retreat, and had left only a rear-guard, which would presently follow him. General Foy, who had served a long

* Dispatch to Earl Bathurst, vol. xii. p. 481.

† 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

time in Spain, is said to have replied, "Wellington never shows his troops; but if he is yonder, I must warn your majesty that the English infantry in close combat is the very devil!" (*L'infanterie anglaise en duel c'est le diable.*) Marshal Soult is said to have added his warning to that of Foy. But whatever were the opinions of the marshals and generals who had really measured themselves with our great Captain in the Peninsula, it seems quite certain that Buonaparte began the battle with a confident assurance of success, for he knew his own vast superiority in artillery, and he had run into the woful mistake that Marshal Blucher, dispirited by the loss he had sustained at Ligny, would continue his retreat in order to avoid Grouchy, and would not rally anywhere near enough to support Wellington.

Soon after 10 o'clock on the Sabbath morn, a great stir was observed along the French lines; and presently a furious attack was made upon the post at Hougoumont, on the right of Wellington's centre. Hougoumont, with its farm-house and garden, was occupied by a detachment from General Byng's brigade of guards, who maintained the post throughout the day, in the teeth of desperate and repeated attacks of large bodies of the enemy. This first attack upon the right of our centre was accompanied by a very heavy cannonade upon our whole line. This cannonade was kept up nearly throughout the day, being intended to support the frequent attacks of cavalry and infantry, now mixed and now separate, which were made along our line, from right to left, and from left to right. The duke had not half the number of guns which Buonaparte brought forward; but such guns as he had were served to perfection; and the advanced batteries of our centre, firing case-shot, committed a fearful havoc upon the French columns which successively attacked our post at Hougoumont. The incessant roar of artillery on both sides, for so many hours, gave to the combat a peculiar and awful character. There was no manœuvring either on the part of Buonaparte, or on the part of Wellington; the object of the British general was to maintain his position till the arrival of some Prussian corps should enable him to quit it, and crush his foe; the object of that foe was to drive him from his position, and to crush him before Blucher should be able to send a single battalion to his support. And to this end Buonaparte kept repeating his attacks with heavy columns of infantry, and with a numerous and brilliant cavalry, hammering at us nearly all the time with his immense artillery. At one

moment the left of our position was in some danger through the sudden retreat of a brigade of Belgians.

"From each attempt the French columns returned shattered and thinned; but fresh columns were formed and hurled against the same or some other part of Wellington's line. The repulses were numerous, the glimpses of success brief and few. In one of their attacks the French carried the farm-house of La Haye Sainte, as a detachment of the light battalion of the German Legion which occupied it had expended all their ammunition, and the enemy had cut off the only communication there was with them. But before they yielded that farm-house, those brave Germans were, to a man, either killed or wounded; and, as the French gave them no quarter, they all died. Buonaparte then ordered his cavalry to charge the British infantry in squadrons and in masses; to charge home; to charge again and again; and to find out some way through those ringing muskets, and those hedges of glittering bayonets! But this was work beyond the power even of his steel-clad cuirassiers, or of his long-armed Polish lancers: our infantry formed in squares, and the best of those horsemen bit the dust. At times the French cavalry were seen walking their horses about our infrangible squares, as if they had been of the same army. Some of their regiments gave proof, not only of great bravery, but also of rare perseverance. All their efforts, however, were unavailing; and the dogged determination of Buonaparte in throwing them forward so repeatedly to do what they were clearly incapable of doing, ended in their almost total destruction. Their *coup-de-grace* was hastened by a magnificent charge of British cavalry."* Although the Scots Greys—"those terrible Greys!"—had astonished the French, and drawn from Buonaparte an involuntary exclamation of astonishment and admiration, our cavalry had hitherto been very little more than a spectator of the fight; it had suffered somewhat from the incessant French cannonade, but all the horses that were not wounded were fresh and vigorous, and there were horses there of the true high English breed, and riders on them whom no continental cavalry could hope to stand against.

At the proper moment, the Duke of Wellington called up Lord E. Somerset's brigade of heavy cavalry, consisting of the Life Guards, the Royal Horse Guards, and the 1st Dragoon Guards, and directed them to charge the already crippled and disheartened cavalry of Buonaparte. These

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

splendid regiments absolutely rode down and rode over their comparatively feeble opponents; horses and men fell at their shock; the cuirassiers, whose breast-plates had glittered in so many battles and victories, disappeared from the world as a corps, and became a thing that had been; they were completely cut up.* After this almost total destruction of his cavalry, and after the frightful reduction of his columns of infantry, Buonaparte was, if not as good as beaten, at the least put into a condition from which the duke could have had nothing to apprehend, even though no Prussians had come up. Except the Guards, every part of the French army had been engaged, repulsed, and frightfully thinned. Not a point of the British position had been carried. Not a single square had been broken; and, though our loss in killed and wounded had been great, some of the duke's troops had not yet been engaged at all, and all were full of heart and of confidence in their great leader."†

Buonaparte had invited Ney to dine with him that evening at Brussels; and at six o'clock he is *said* to have remarked, that they would yet arrive there in good time. This is merely a *say:* at 6 P.M., and at no part of the day, did they see a chance of getting to Brussels.

General Clausewitz may be taken as a competent, and as an unprejudiced authority as to the condition in which the two contending armies stood when the Prussians came up. Clausewitz was chief of the staff to the third corps of the Prussian army. If he had prejudices, they were not likely to be in favour of Wellington and against Blucher. He knocks on the head the nonsense that has been circulated about the duke having exhausted his reserves in the action; and he enumerates the tenth British brigade, the whole division of Chassè, and the cavalry of Collaert, as having been little or not at all engaged; and to these he might have added two entire brigades of light cavalry. Moreover, General Clausewitz expresses a positive opinion, that, even had the whole of Grouchy's force come up at Waterloo (which it could not do, and which it was prevented from doing by Buonaparte's lamentable mistake about Blucher, and by the positive orders he had himself given to Grouchy), the Duke of Wellington could have had nothing to fear pending Blucher's march and arrival.‡ Had "Marshal

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III. † Ibid. vol. iv.

‡ General Clausewitz, as cited in 'Quarterly Review,' No. 140, article, 'Life of Blucher.'

Forwards" not come up when he did, the duke would have kept his own; and the last charges of the French, if made at all, would have been repulsed, as all their preceding attacks had been. But had the French retreated, there could have been no pursuit; and if Blucher had not been at hand, there might have been a renewal of the combat on the morrow.

Lord E. Somerset's heavy brigade of cavalry had made its annihilating charge, there was a pause in the battle; and it was about seven o'clock in the evening when artillery was heard at a distance, and a staff officer reported to the duke that the head of a Prussian column was already coming in sight. Very shortly after, Bulow's corps, advancing upon La Belle Alliance, began to engage the French right. And now was the short agony for Buonaparte. He called forward his guard, which he had kept in reserve for a last desperate effort. He led it forward, in person, to the foot of our position; but then he turned aside, and took shelter behind some swelling ground. The guard moved onward, looking on Buonaparte as they passed him. "*Morituri te salutant!*"* He ought to have gone on with it, and to have died with it; but he neither headed it nor followed it; nor did he, during any part of this day, expose his person freely in the mêlée of battle, as he had done in the spring of 1814, in the battles of Craonne, Arcis-sur-Aube, and in other affairs on French ground. Ney went on with that great forlorn hope, and, unluckily for himself, was not killed. The guard advanced in two massy columns, leaving only four battalions of the old guard in reserve, near to the sheltered spot where Buonaparte sat on his horse, sallow, rigid, and fixed, like a mummy. The guards moved resolutely on, with supported arms, under a destructive fire from our position. They were met by General Maitland's brigade of English guards, and General Adam's brigade, which were rapidly moved from the right by the Duke of Wellington in person, who formed them four deep, and flanked their line with artillery. That the duke, on first moving them from some cover under which they had been screened, shouted out, "Up! guards, and at them!" is now recognised as a fable. His grace never did anything theatrically, and never used any such language to his troops. An aide-de-camp gave the order in the usual quiet manner; the officers in command of our guards obeyed the order,

* Suetonius, in Claudian.

under the eye of their great chief, and the duke advanced with the guards over the brow of the low hill, and then stood to meet the last charge. When within fifty yards from the line of the English guards, the French guards attempted to deploy; but the close fire upon them was too terrible; their flanks were enveloped, they got mixed together in a confused mass, and in that condition they were slaughtered, broken, and driven down the slope of the hill. There was no more fighting; that Grand Army of Buonaparte—the last of all, and the most desperate of all—never again stood, nor attempted to rally: all the rest of the work was headlong, unresisted pursuit; slaughter of fugitives, who had entirely lost their military formations; and capture of prisoners, artillery, and spoils. The army was destroyed, as an army, before the pursuit began. If it had not been so, the Prussians could not possibly have found the pursuit such easy work. In flying, Buonaparte and his guards left about 150 pieces of cannon in the hands of the English. Before that flight began, Blucher had been for a time hotly engaged at Planchenois. At a farm-house, called "Maison Rouge," or "Maison du Roi," at a short distance behind Planchenois and the farm of La Belle Alliance, the Duke and the Marshal met, and Blucher, in the manner of the continent, embraced and hugged his victorious partner. Here Wellington gave orders for the halt and bivouack of his own fatigued troops, and handed over the task of further pursuit to the Prussians. Blucher swore that he would follow up the French with his last horse, and his last man. He started off immediately with two Prussian corps, who began the chase with the encouragement of three cheers from the English army.*

"The guard dies, but does not surrender!" This was a self-flattering fiction which the French afterwards recorded in prose and rhyme, in paintings, engravings, and sculptures, and in all manner of ways. But these flying French guards really surrendered in bands, and cried for quarter. Close to Genappe, Blucher captured 60 guns belonging to the said imperial guard, together with carriages, baggage, &c., belonging to Buonaparte himself. The moon had now risen, and in broad moonlight the Prussians kept up the chase, the French abandoning all they had, and scarcely attempting to stop anywhere until they got within the lines of their

* Southey, in 'Quarterly Review,' vol. xiii. 'Wellington Dispatches,' vol. xii. pp. 481-8. Sir Francis Head, 'Quarterly Review.' General Alava's account, &c. &c. &c.

own frontier fortresses, from which they had issued with so much pride and confidence only five days before. The high-road, says General Gueisenau, resembled the sea-shore after some great shipwreck—it was covered with cannon, caissons, carriages, baggage, arms, and wreck of every description.

In the mean while the British and their Allies, by the same broad moonlight, were counting their dead and picking up their wounded; or, rather, they were making a beginning, for those sad offices took up not only that night, but the whole of the following morning. The loss had been immense. The British and Hanoverians alone had 2,432 killed, and 9,528 wounded, in the battle of Waterloo. The loss of officers was quite proportionate to the loss of men, more than 600 having been killed or wounded in the British and Hanoverian corps alone. General Picton, who had been wounded at Quatre Bras, and who had concealed his hurt, was shot through the brain early in the battle, as he was leading his division to a bayonet charge. General Sir William Ponsonby, who was with the heavy cavalry, was killed by a Polish lancer; his relative, General Sir Frederick Ponsonby, was shot through the body by a Frenchman, was ridden over by the charging cavalry, and was speared, as he lay bleeding and helpless on the ground, by a savage Pole; but he miraculously recovered, and lived many years to charm all those who knew him, or who ever approached him. Colonel de Lancy, the excellent quarter-master-general, was killed by a cannon-shot in the middle of the action. The Earl of Uxbridge lost his leg. General Cooke, General Halkett, General Sir Edward Barnes, General Baron Alten, Lieut.-Colonel Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the Honourable T. Howard, the Prince of Orange, were all among the wounded, and most of them were severely wounded. Lieut.-Colonel the Honourable Sir Alexander Gordon, brother to the present Earl of Aberdeen, died of his wounds soon after being removed from the field. The gallant Duke of Brunswick perished, as we have seen, on the 16th, at Quatre Bras; he fell at the head of his own black hussars. The officers of several foreign nations, who came to volunteer their services to the duke, did not escape unhurt: the Austrian General Vincent was wounded, and Count Pozzo de Borgo, who was then both a general and a diplomatist in the service of the Emperor Alexander of Russia, received a contusion. The Spanish General Alava had some hairbreadth escapes. The present Prince Castelcicala, now Neapolitan Minister

at the Court of St. James's, but then a brave young officer in one of our cavalry regiments, ran equal risk. On the duke's staff there was hardly an officer that escaped wounds or death. At one moment he had no officer near him to carry an immediate order, except a young Piedmontese gentleman of the family of De Salis. "Were you ever in a battle before?" said the duke. "No, my lord," replied the young officer. "Then," said the duke, "you are a lucky man, for you will never see such another." *

During the whole of the dreadful day the duke was calm and collected, his countenance was serene and even cheerful, except at times when his eye rested on the heaps of his killed and wounded. He stood for a long time near a remarkable tree with his spy-glass in his hand, and so near to some of the French posts that his features could be distinctly seen by the aid of a good glass. An Italian officer, who was with Buonaparte, told me a few years after the battle, that the quietness of the duke's demeanour, and the tranquillity of his countenance, struck him with dismay, and made him believe that he must have some enormous force concealed on the reverse of his position, or that Blucher was coming up hours before he did. I can conceive that this equanimity and perfect self-possession afterwards gave way, for a time.

"On the night of the memorable battle," says a British officer, "the words and emotions of the conqueror will long be remembered by those who sat with him at supper, after the anxious and awful day had closed. The fountain of a great heart lies deep, and the self-government of a calm mind permits no tears. But this night, Wellington repeatedly leaned back upon his chair, and rubbing his hands convulsively, exclaimed aloud, 'Thank God, I have met him! Thank God, I have met him!' And, ever as he spake, the smile that lighted up his eye was immediately dimmed by those few and big tears that gush warm from a grateful heart." †

The conduct and movements of General Grouchy, upon whom the French would have thrown the entire blame of losing the battle, has been grossly misrepresented and falsified. Grouchy, in tracking Blucher, could do little or nothing to injure him; and Grouchy was not up in time to take part in the battle with Wellington, simply because he could not get there in time, or, indeed, at all. The Prussian General Thielman, with 16,000 men, kept him

* Sir Francis Head, in 'Quarterly Review.'

† Capt. M. Sherer, 'Military Memoir.'

and his 32,000 French fully employed on the river Dyle for several hours, during which Blucher threw himself between Grouchy and Buonaparte with his superior forces. When evening was setting in, when our cavalry was crushing the French, and when the Prussian marshal was giving the hand to the duke, Grouchy was thirteen or fourteen good English miles off, with sorely fatigued troops. He was not at Waterloo, simply because he could not by any possibility be there. There was no treachery in the case: if Grouchy could even have done that which Buonaparte too confidently expected he would do, he would not have been at Waterloo; but, in that case, no more would Blucher. It was too much for the French to pretend they anticipated that Grouchy would prevent the junction of Blucher and Wellington, by driving the Prussians towards the Rhine, and be also on the field of Waterloo! The day after that battle he fell rapidly back upon the frontier of France, conducting his retreat in a manner which did honour to him as a general.*

On the first day of his pursuit (the first after the battle), brave old Blucher wrote to his lady:—"My dear wife, you well know what I promised you, and I have kept my word. Superiority of numbers forced me to give way on the 17th, but on the 18th, in conjunction with my friend Wellington, I put an end at once to Buonaparte's dancing!"

On the same day, the duke (among other letters of condolence and of business) wrote to the Earl of Aberdeen:—"You will readily give credit to the existence of the extreme grief with which I announce to you the death of your gallant brother. . . . He received the wound which occasioned his death while rallying one of the Brunswick battalions, which was shaking a little, and he lived long enough to be informed by myself of the glorious result of our actions, to which he had so much contributed by his active and zealous assistance. I cannot express to you the regret and sorrow with which I look round me and contemplate the loss which I have sustained, particularly in your brother. The glory resulting from such actions, so dearly bought, is no consolation to me, and I cannot suggest it as any to you and his friends; but I hope it may be expected that this last one has been so decisive, as that no doubt remains that our exertions and our individual losses will be rewarded by the early attainment of our just object. It is *then* that the glory of the actions in which our friends

* 'Pict. Hist.' Reign of George III.

and relations have fallen, will be some consolation for their loss."*

Buonaparte himself was the first man that carried to Paris the news of his irretrievable disaster. He was soon followed by Marshal Ney, who was bursting with rage and desperation. Innumerable, and worthy of ignoble minds, were the criminations and recriminations. Ney accused Buonaparte, and Buonaparte, Ney. "Ney conducted himself like a madman; he caused my cavalry to be massacred!" Disgraceful scenes ensued. Ney interrupted Carnot, and gave the lie direct to him and to Davoust, who had been led by Buonaparte to declare that the Prussians were in retreat, and the English in no condition to advance. "That is false," cried Ney, "that is false! You are deceiving the people! Wellington is coming! Blucher is not beaten: there is nothing left to us but the corps of Marshal Grouchy. In six or seven days the enemy will be here!"

A farcical attempt was made to induce a recognition of Buonaparte's son by Maria Louisa of Austria. Joseph and Lucien Buonaparte, Charles Labédoyère, Flahault, and others, entered the ephemeral house of peers which Buonaparte had made on his return from Elba; they came to announce the *voluntary* abdication of Napoleon I., and to proclaim Napoleon II.; and they shouted,—"The Emperor is politically dead! Long live Napoleon II.!" But these men could not find the elements of a party wild enough to support, or even to acknowledge, the claims of a child; and it was clear that Buonaparte himself was deserted by the mass of the French people. There was a talk of his throwing himself, with the remnant of his grand army, into the country beyond the Loire, and there collecting more troops; but he knew that the armies of all Europe were marching against him; that, while Wellington and Blucher were on the north-eastern frontier, the Austrian General Frimont was advancing through Switzerland and Savoy, to attack on that side; that Prince Schwartzenberg was now ready to cross the Rhine with enormous forces; and that the Emperor Alexander was not far off with 200,000 Russians. The Allies, indeed, could have put 800,000 men into France before the end of the month of July. On the 22nd of June, four days after his defeat at Waterloo, he retired to the pleasant summer palace of Malmaison, in the neighbourhood of Paris, and, after lingering there a few days, he repaired to the sea-port of Rochefort, with the desperate hope of finding some

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 488.

means whereby to escape to the United States of America. Finding that there were no such means, that the population was declaring warmly for the Bourbons, and that if he remained any longer on shore he might be assassinated or made prisoner, he went on board our ship of the line the *Bellerophon;* Captain Maitland most distinctly telling him, "*that he was in total ignorance of the intention of the British Government as to his future disposal.*"

The Chambers of Paris set up a provisional government, consisting of Caulaincourt, Quinette, Grenier, Carnot, and Fouché, a most strange jumble of men and principles. The ex-Jacobin Fouché took the lead.

The British and Prussian armies met with hardly any opposition on the march to the French capital. On the 1st of July, Wellington took up a position a few short miles from Paris; and on the 2nd, Blucher crossed the Seine at St. Germain, and posted the Prussians between Plessis-Piquet and St. Cloud, with their reserve at Versailles. Two days before this, while the Duke of Wellington was at Etrées, commissioners were sent to him by the provisional government to negotiate a suspension of hostilities. These commissioners began with asserting that Buonaparte's abdication had virtually put an end to the war.

The duke told them that he could not consider the abdication in any other light than as a trick; and that he could not stop his operations. While the duke was talking, he received Louis XVIII.'s proclamation, dated Cambray, the 28th of June, and countersigned by Prince Talleyrand. He handed the paper immediately to the French commissioners. These persons took some objection to certain paragraphs in the proclamation, wherein the king announced his intention of punishing some of those concerned in the plot which had brought back Buonaparte from Elba. Although not named as yet, the commissioners, the provisional government, and all France must have understood that Marshal Ney, Charles Labédoyère, and Lavallette were included in this traitorous category; and that the government of Louis XVIII. reserved to itself the right of bringing them to condign punishment. To the remarks of the commissioners on the avenging paragraphs, the duke had nothing to say; and they themselves really appear to have said or thought very little about the matter. I call attention to the paragraphs only in order to prove that the commissioners, the provisional government, and Marshal Davoust, who now commanded in Paris, perfectly well knew

the intention of Louis XVIII. with regard to Ney, Labédoyère and others, three or four days before they concluded the convention of Paris with Wellington and Blucher,—a convention in which the case of those traitors was not provided for in any way.

The commissioners went back to Paris, and then returned to the English camp; but still they attempted to make no provision for excepting Ney or Labédoyère, or any one from the avenging paragraph by virtue of the convention with Wellington and Blucher. What the commissioners came for was only to know whether the Allies would not agree to an armistice, and keep at some distance from Paris. The duke told them that he would not consent to suspend hostilities, so long as a soldier of Buonaparte's army remained in Paris. This army, counting shattered and disorganized corps, fugitives from Waterloo, and all, was estimated by the provisional government at 40,000 men. It probably amounted to 30,000; and, under the influence of Labédoyère and other reckless officers it had declared for Napoleon II. On the 1st of July, Davoust wrote to the British commander-in-chief on the subject of the armistice; but the French marshal did not yet adopt the terms without which Wellington had resolved not to suspend his movements for a single hour. He and Blucher had, therefore, advanced, as we have seen, almost to the suburbs of the capital. In taking up his position on the left bank of the Seine, on the 2nd of July, the army of Napoleon II. offered some resistance to the Prussian marshal; and there was even some hard fighting on the heights of St. Cloud and Meudon, and in the village of Issy, which was renewed (at Issy) on the morning of the 3rd, to the loss and discomfiture of the French. No attempt was made to check the approaches or molest the positions of the British. The provisional government and Davoust now yielded to necessity, and to the terms which the Duke of Wellington had proposed to their commissioners three days before, with this important addition, that the city of Paris, the heights of Montmartre, and all its other defences, were to be put quietly in possession of the British and Prussian armies. They sent out a flag of truce, desiring the firing might cease on both sides of the Seine, and that negotiations might be opened at the palace of St. Cloud, "for a *military* convention between the armies, *under which the French army should evacuate Paris.*"*

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. pp. 533-52.

Officers accordingly met on both sides at St. Cloud; and on that night the *military* convention was concluded by three French officers, one English officer, and one Prussian officer; and on the following day the convention was approved by Wellington, Blucher, and Davoust, and fully ratified. On the same day, and almost as soon as he had signed the deed, the duke wrote to his government, "This convention decides all the military questions at this moment existing here, *and touches nothing political.*"

The French troops, as by this agreement bound, had all evacuated Paris by the 6th, and begun their march towards the Loire. Labédoyère is said to have gone with them, or to have followed them; but Marshal Ney fled from Paris in disguise on the 6th, with a passport, under a false name, given to him by Fouché. This was proof enough—this was his own confession by his own act and deed—that Ney did not consider himself included in the convention or capitulation. He knew that the provisional government, indifferent as to his fate, had introduced no article, clause, or paragraph, to shield him and others in his predicament. He knew that the Duke of Wellington would never interfere with the *political* or *judicial* action of the French government, and could never have agreed to negotiate upon such a subject; and therefore it was that Ney, alike conscious of his guilt and of his danger, fled in an ignominious manner from Paris the day before the Allied Armies took possession of that city. At the moment of his flight, Louis XVIII., whom he had betrayed with circumstances of the most exasperating kind, was at St. Denis, only eight miles from Paris. To punish or to protect Ney, was no affair of the duke's: had he wished it, there were good grounds for believing that the astucious Fouché would have seized the marshal, and sent him a prisoner into his own camp, or to the king at St. Denis.

On the 7th of July the British and Prussian armies took possession of the French capital, without any outward or visible sign of that *beau désespoir*—that war to the knife—with which they had been so often menaced. The English established themselves in the Bois de Boulogne, where they found an encampment: the Prussians occupied some of the churches, and bivouacked at the heads of the streets, and along the quays on the Seine. The first night passed off with perfect order and tranquillity; but at midnight, on the 8th, the duke was obliged to take up the pen in order to check the pace of "Marshal Forwards."

In the positions they occupied, the Prussians were brought into immediate contact with two objects, which roused their nationality and inflamed their ire. These obnoxious objects were Buonaparte's bronzed column of Victory in the Place Vendôme, which recorded the defeats of the Prussians, as well as of other nations; and the bridge of Jena, which had been named after the bloody battle whereby Napoleon had broken up the Prussian monarchy for a time, and had broken the heart of the fair Prussian queen for ever. No Prussian in the army felt these things more acutely than Blucher, whose body, too, had been scarred with wounds in the disastrous campaign of Jena. He, therefore, thought it no questionable act to blow this Paris bridge of Jena into the air, and to pull down the column of a man who, in Prussia, had destroyed the pillar which commemorated the great national victory of Rosbach, and had plundered the very tomb of Frederick the Great. The Prussians were actually at work upon the bridge with the insufferable name, when the duke intervened. The following letter is, in every way, curious and interesting; and it is corroborative of all that has been said of our great Captain's moderation, gentleness, and friendliness:—

"To Marshal Prince Blucher.

Paris, 8th July, 1815, Midnight.

"Mein Lieber Fürst,

"Several reports have been brought to me during the evening and night, and some from the government, in consequence of the work carrying on by your highness on one of the bridges over the Seine, which it is supposed to be your intention to destroy.

"As this measure will certainly create a good deal of disturbance in the town, and as the sovereigns, when they were here before, left all these bridges, &c., standing, I take the liberty of suggesting to you to delay the destruction of the bridge, at least till they shall arrive; or, at all events, till I can have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow morning. Believe me, &c.

"Wellington."*

"Marshal Prince Blucher."

Blucher held his hand, and consented on the morrow that the bridge should be left standing, provided only the French

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 549.

government changed its odious name — which they did. "Marshal Forwards," moreover, could see no harm in levying a military contribution of 100,000,000 francs upon the city of Paris; for had not Buonaparte and the French done worse than this in Berlin? and how had the French recompensed the Allies for their forbearance and generosity last year when Paris was in their power, even as it now was? Upon this and other points also the Duke of Wellington interposed; and, after some grumbling, the rough old Prussian consented that no military contribution should be imposed; that the column of victory should not be destroyed, &c.* And how did the Buonapartists repay this moderation and magnanimity? They set it all down to fear—to the dread the Allies entertained of their *beau désespoir!*

On the 8th of July, Louis XVIII. re-entered Paris, escorted by the national guard of that city, and tranquilly resumed the government. Even now, through the personal character of the French king, and through other influences, conspicuous among which were the humane recommendations of Prince Talleyrand and the Duke of Wellington, the vengeance taken on the Buonapartists was almost miraculously moderate. In order to render their existence the more desperate, Labédoyère and others of the faction had talked of an interminable list of proscriptions, of the guillotine in constant action, as in the Reign of Terror! Yet, when the avenging royal ordinance was published (on the 24th of July), it was found to contain only fifty-seven names; and of these, only nineteen were threatened with capital punishment, or trial before a military tribunal. The first name on the black list was that of Ney; the second was that of Labédoyère; and, eventually, these were the only two men who were put to death. Not to mention what was done by the Jacobins of the Republic, or by Buonaparte on numerous other occasions, I would revive the recollection of what took place in 1812, upon the discovery of General Mallet's conspiracy. That general, who was decidedly insane, two other general officers, and eleven officers of various grades, were brought before a court-martial, which proved itself to be inaccessible to the feeling of mercy. "Gentlemen," exclaimed one of the prisoners, "have mercy—have pity upon us! We are all old officers, riddled with balls! and we are all fathers of families!" These fourteen prisoners, who had all fought and bled for the republic or for Buonaparte, were all pitilessly fusiladed

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. p. 549-54.

on the plain of Grenelle, for an insurrection which had lasted only five hours, which had cost neither blood nor money, and which had been put down with the greatest ease. These sanguinary acts were performed under the direction of Savary, Cambacérès, and other Buonapartists of that quality; and the party generally, who afterwards made heaven and earth ring with their affected lamentations for the death of Labédoyère and Ney, applauded what was done on the plain of Grenelle, as the quick and energetic action of a strong government.

Labédoyère came back to Paris in disguise, and with projects which have not yet been fully explained. He was detected in his hiding-place, arrested, and, in conformity with the ordinance of the 24th of July, was handed over to a *conseil de guerre*. This court willingly and readily tried him, without once referring to the convention of Paris, which, if good for Ney, was good for Labédoyère; and as the facts of the case were all capable of being proved by thousands of witnesses, as the prisoner himself confessed them all—confessed that after taking the oath of fidelity to Louis XVIII., he had plotted for the return of Napoleon, and had been the very first to join him with troops; and as he had no extenuating circumstances to plead, except that more powerful officers were more guilty than he, and that nearly the whole army had been in the conspiracy, the court condemned him to be shot as a traitor; and he was shot on the evening of the 19th of August.

Ney, who had every facility afforded him by Talleyrand, Fouché, and even by the Austrian general Bubna, to escape into other countries, and who would scarcely have been found in his own country if he had not entertained some wild scheme, was brought to his account a few months later.

Many ardent royalists had been in search of him, and at last, when the search had been abandoned, a volunteer of this class, who was prefect of police of the department, but who had received no instructions from the Bourbon government, discovered and seized the marshal in an obscure public-house in Auvergne—a region of extinct volcanoes. He was immediately brought up to Paris. The council of war, composed of marshals and generals, declared that it was not competent to try him. This was on the 9th of November. Ney was then handed over to the Chamber of Peers, the Duke of Richelieu, President of the Council, presenting to the chamber the Act of Accusation, and the

Royal Ordinance (signed by *all* the French ministers), ordering them to try Ney for high treason, etc. The Chamber of Peers, without demur, proceeded with the trial. The proofs of guilt were, of course, even clearer than in Labédoyère's case. Ney, himself, admitted that when Buonaparte landed from Elba, he had solicited Louis XVIII. for the command of the army which was to be sent against him; and that, on getting what he wished, and on kissing the king's hand at parting, he had sworn that within a week he would bring Buonaparte to Paris in an iron cage. On the 6th of December the peers, by a majority of a hundred and thirty-eight against twenty-two, returned a verdict of Guilty —Death; and of the very small minority, not one voted for a verdict of Not Guilty; seventeen of the peers recommending transportation, and five of them declining to vote at all.

It was now that the Convention of Paris, which had been held to be of no effect with regard to Labédoyère, was to be misinterpreted for the benefit of Ney, and that the honoured name of the Duke of Wellington was to be brought in as that of a man who could break an agreement, and who was eager to gratify his personal revenge against the great French marshal, for his having (so said the Buonapartists) beaten him so often in battle!

Madame Ney waited upon the duke to quote the convention to him, and to demand his interference, not as a favour, but as a right,—to prove to him that he was bound in honour, and by his own act, to protect her husband. The lady says the duke replied, that he had nothing to do with the government of the King of France, and that it was not in his power to stop its justice. If the Duke of Wellington said so, he said that which was perfectly true; for the military convention he had signed and ratified gave him no such right, and did not in any way cover or protect the great delinquent. From the quarters who reported, in their own way, these proceedings to the Buonaparte world, which was now assuming the congruous name of "Liberal," it was not to be expected that any notice should be taken of the commiseration and delicacy with which the duke treated the wife of the condemned traitor. Notes were addressed to all the foreign ambassadors in Paris, and every one of them took the same view of the convention as was taken by the duke. Ney himself wrote to Wellington, but in the same sense in which his wife had spoken to his grace. Madame Ney then made matters still more hopeless, by publishing a

defective and incorrect account of the conversation which she had had with the duke. In consequence of this publication, which set forward in the eyes of the whole world the 12th article of the Convention of Paris as binding the British and Prussian Commanders-in-chief to protect Ney, the Duke of Wellington drew up a memorandum on the 19th of November, which was communicated to the ministers of the Allied powers, and afterwards published. I give, in full, this paper, which ought to have set the question at rest for ever, and to have prevented the nonsense which was spoken and written at the time, and which has been repeated, even by some Englishmen, down to the present day, or to quite a recent date.

MEMORANDUM RESPECTING MARÉCHAL NEY.

Paris, 19th Nov. 1815.

"It is extraordinary that Madame la Maréchale Ney should have thought proper to publish in print parts of a conversation which she is supposed to have had with the Duke of Wellington, and that she has omitted to publish that which is a much better record of the duke's opinion on the subject to which the conversation related, viz., the duke's letter to the Maréchal Prince de la Moskwa, in answer to the Maréchal's note to his grace. That letter was as follows:—

"'I have had the honour of receiving the note which you addressed to me on the 13th of November, relating to the operation of the capitulation of Paris on your case. The capitulation of Paris of the 3rd July was made between the Commanders-in-chief of the allied British and Prussian armies on the one part, and the Prince d'Eckmuhl,* Commander-in-chief of the French army on the other; and related exclusively to the military occupation of Paris.

"'The object of the 12th article was to prevent the adoption of any measures of severity, under the military authority of those who made it, towards any persons in Paris on account of the offices which they had filled, or their conduct, or their political opinions. But it was never intended, and could not be intended, to prevent either the existing French government, under whose authority the French Commander-in-chief must have acted, or any French government which should succeed to it, from acting in this respect as it might deem fit.'—

"It is obvious from this letter that the Duke of Wel-

* Davoust.

lington, one of the parties to the capitulation of Paris, considers that that instrument contains nothing which can prevent the king from bringing Marshal Ney to trial in such manner as his Majesty may think proper.

"The contents of the capitulation fully confirms the justice of the duke's opinion. It is made between the Commanders-in-chief of the contending armies respectively; and the first nine articles relate solely to the mode and time of evacuation of Paris by the French army, and of the occupation by the British and Prussian armies.

"The 10th article provides that the existing authorities shall be respected by the two Commanders-in-chief of the Allies; the 11th, that public property shall be respected, and that the Allies shall not interfere 'en aucune maniére dans leur administration, et dans leur gestion;' and the 12th article states, 'seront pareillement respectées les personnes et les propriétés particuliéres; les habitans, et en général tous les individus qui se trovent dans la capitale, continueront à jouir de leur droits et libertés, sans pouvoir être inquiétés ou récherchés en rien rélativement aux fonctions qu'ils occupent ou auraient occupées, à leur conduite, et à leurs opinions politiques.'

"By whom were these private properties and persons to be respected? By the Allied generals and their troops, mentioned in the 10th and 11th articles, and not by other parties to whom the convention did not relate in any manner.

"The 13th article provides that 'les troupes étrangères' shall not obstruct the carriage of provisions by land or water to the capital.

"Thus it appears that every article in the convention relates exclusively to the operations of the different armies, or to the conduct of the Allies and that of their generals when they should enter Paris; and as the Duke of Wellington states in his dispatch of the 4th of July, with which he transmitted the convention to England, it 'decided all the military points then existing at Paris, and touched nothing political.'

"But it appears clearly, that not only was this the duke's opinion of the convention at the time it was signed, but likewise the opinion of Carnot, of Marshal Ney, and of every other person who had an interest in considering the subject.

"Carnot says, in the *Exposé de la Conduite Politique de M. Carnot* (page 43), — 'Il fut résolu d'envoyer aux généraux Anglais et Prussiens une commission spéciale chargée de leur proposer une convention purement militaire, pour la remise de la ville de Paris entre leur mains, en

écartant toute question politique, puisqu on ne pouvait préjuger quelles seraient les intentions des Alliés, lorsqu'ils seraient réunis.'

"It appears that Marshal Ney fled from Paris in disguise, with a passport given to him by the Duke d'Otrante,* under a feigned name, on the 6th of July. He could not be supposed to be ignorant of the tenor of the 12th article of the convention; and he must then have known whether it was the intention of the parties who made it that it should protect him from the measures which the king, then at St. Denis, should think proper to adopt against him.

"But if Marshal Ney could be supposed ignorant of the intention of the 12th article, the Duke d'Otrante could not, as he was at the head of the provisional government, under whose authority the Prince d'Eckmuhl must have acted when he signed the convention.

"Would the Duke d'Otrante have given a passport under a feigned name to Marshal Ney, if he had understood the 12th article as giving the marshal any protection, excepting against measures of severity by the two Commanders-in-chief?

"Another proof of what was the opinion of the Duke d'Otrante, of the king's ministers, and of all the persons most interested in establishing the meaning now attempted to be given to the 12th article of the convention of the 3rd of July, is the king's proclamation of the 12th of July, by which nineteen persons are ordered for trial, and thirty-eight persons are ordered to quit Paris, and to reside in particular parts of France, under the observation and superintendence of the police, till the chambers should decide upon their fate.

"Did the Duke d'Otrante, did any of the persons on their behalf, even then, or now, claim for them the protection of the 12th article of the convention? Certainly the convention was then understood, as it ought to be understood now, viz., that it was exclusively military, and was never intended to bind the then existing government of France, or any government which should succeed it.

"WELLINGTON."†

The French government had been entirely changed in the month of September, and Talleyrand, with whom Wellington had at times conferred on internal French affairs, as being the only wise statesman in employment,

* Fouché. † 'Dispatches,' vol. xii. pp. 694-6.

and the most moderate, was no longer in office, and was no longer consulted by the king. It was Talleyrand and the duke who had stopped many measures of severity which had been contemplated by the ultra-Bourbonists. That hot party was now in power, and could not forgive Ney. Others, not nearly so warm, thought it was time that a great example should be given. When the cabinet had decided on the execution, it would have been a breach of diplomatic *convenance*, or a bad precedent in one who served a constitutional government, to make a breach between that cabinet and the sovereign; yet, like many others, I have been assured that the Duke of Wellington did attempt to make interest at court and elsewhere in favour of the condemned marshal. Such a line of conduct would have been in keeping with the nobleness and magnanimity of his nature; but Ney merited his fate, and Ney, to him, had never been a generous or courteous enemy, as Soult, Marmont, and a few—a very few—more of Buonaparte's generals had been during the contest in the Peninsula. Those who formed the exceptional cases were French *gentlemen*; and a *gentleman*—though a marshal, duke, prince, and peer—Ney never was, for he retained to the last the manners, habits, and language of a common dragooner, in which capacity he had commenced his career. He was shot at 9 o'clock on the morning of the 7th of December, in broad daylight, in the public gardens of the Luxembourg, without the slightest commotion. The public funds, which had been fluctuating, rose as soon as it was known that he was dead.

By the madmen or the impostors of the Buonaparte faction, the duke was held up to execration and revenge as the real murderer of Ney. A subaltern officer, one Marie André Cantillon, attempted the duke's life by firing a pistol at him, but the ruffian's ball missed its aim. The assassin was acquitted by a Parisian jury, who must have been convinced of his guilt. Cantillon became very popular with the revolutionary party; and Buonaparte, only a few days before his own death, put a codicil to his will, bequeathing him 10,000 francs, and saying that Cantillon had as much right to assassinate the duke, as the duke had to send him to St. Helena (which the duke had not done). There were other plots to take off the duke, during his residence as ambassador at Paris, but he feared them not, and there was a blessed Providence to protect him from them all.

The duke's splendid military career may be said to have terminated with the entrance of the British and Prussian

armies into Paris on the 7th of July 1815; and at the end of that same year we lose the guiding light of his own Dispatches, which contain so many other matters in addition to those of mere war and campaigning. The authentic materials for an account of his diplomacy at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, at the Congress of Verona, and elsewhere, are not yet accessible; nor is this the time to go even into a sketch of his home-political history, or of his conduct as Prime Minister of England, as a member of the Government, or as a member of the Conservative opposition. I renounce these subjects the more willingly, as it appears that justice is now rendered to the Octogenarian, and that it is universally admitted, in every moment of crisis, that no political arrangement can be made without the advice of the Duke of Wellington.

The most enduring monument of his fame will be his own Dispatches. Yet, about the collecting in one body, and the publishing of these papers as a separate, arranged work, his grace was as indifferent as was Shakspeare about the editing and printing of his immortal dramas. It required the earnest instance of personal friends, and long importunity to make the duke take the least trouble about them, or to consent that Colonel Gurwood should revise and edit the Dispatches for him. He knew that all the most important papers were published in Government Gazettes, Records of Parliament, Annual Registers, and other works, that those engaged in historical researches, or in military studies might find them there, and for a collective edition, as an *æs perennis* of his own glory, he cared no more than for a collection of the old bullets he had seen shot away at Vittoria and Waterloo.

I am of the number of those who consider it an insult to our great Captain, and wise and humane statesman, to draw a parallel, or set up a comparison between him and Buonaparte. From the days of Plutarch downwards, such pretended parallels have always been strongly diverging lines; and, in this instance, to attempt a comparison is only to demonstrate a difference. The lines will not run straight even here, for the second of these illustrious men had certain blemishes and defects which never attached to the first of them; but (instead of comparing him with Buonaparte) I would compare the Duke of Wellington with the Duke of Marlborough, and would take their several dispatches as the means of comparison. While editing the Marlborough Dispatches (in which I had the honour and pleasure of lending some little aid), the late Sir George Murray said to me, "If I could be-

lieve in the metempsychosis, I should surely say that the soul of Marlborough had passed into the body of Wellington." And there are, indeed, in their several dispatches the most wonderful points of resemblance; the same attention to detail, the same incessant care for the provision and well-being of their troops, the same patience under the blunders of impracticable Allies, the same forethought and foresight, the same quietness of demeanour and modesty of expression, the same total absence of fanfaronade (the French were as great boasters in the days of Marlborough and Louis XIV., as in those of Wellington and Napoleon), the same averseness to evasion and trickery in their own officers or in others they might have to deal with, and the same unvarying consideration and humanity for the poor people dwelling on the seat of war, and for the vanquished and wounded enemy. Making a very slight allowance for the difference of time between the beginning of the last century and the commencement of this, the styles of our two great commanders have a wonderful resemblance, in their English dispatches, to each other. And the same may be said of their letters and dispatches in the French language. Neither Marlborough nor Wellington ever had the time or the pretension to write academical French: they had other things to think of; what they wrote was written in a hurry, and was never addressed to any foreigner who could understand English. Marlborough's French was good sound vernacular English, put into good French words, and in very fair French grammar. So was Wellington's. Both were open to critical attacks on the score of idiom, and what is called classical purity,—things to which neither made the slightest pretence (and, be it said, things which the modern French school have set at nought), but both were perfectly intelligible and unmistakeable — which was all they aimed at, and all at which it was needful for them to aim. Too great a homage was rendered by both in employing the French language at all.

To a Frenchman, who was ridiculing some French letters of the Duke of Wellington, I put these questions—"Why did not your marshals and generals correspond in English? or why, by their total ignorance of our language, did they oblige the duke to write in yours? You say that this is not idiomatic French; but is it not concise and perfectly intelligible?" My interlocutor was, of course, ready with the common assertions, that French is the *passe-par-tout* in European society, and that French (which never ought to have been permitted by other nations) is the language of

diplomacy, etc.; but he confessed that there was no possibility of misunderstanding the duke's meaning, and that very few Frenchmen could put so much meaning in so few words.

The dispatches of these illustrious men ought to be found side by side in every English library. Open a volume of the "Duke of Wellington" wherever you will, and you are almost sure to find some proof of his coolness, sagacity, and wisdom, or of that rare sense called common sense. Although the didactic tone or intention is never detected, his letters abound in the most salutary practical lessons, applicable to men of every profession and of every grade or condition of life. There cannot be a greater mistake than to consider the work as merely a soldier's book.

The duke never cared for rhetorical embellishment, or for any of the graces of fine writing. He thought merely of the *matter*, and never of the *manner*. And yet his style is admirable, and thoroughly English. I prefer it to the style of his accomplished brother, the Marquis Wellesley, who was a scholar and a ripe one, and who paid that attention to the niceties of composition which the duke neither cared for nor had time to bestow. The natural, genuine tone, the happy facility and carelessness of the duke are charming in themselves, apart from the matter. Compared with his dispatches, the best of his brother's (however admirable when not brought into this comparison) appear to me somewhat artificial, involved, wordy, and inflated.

Never had a general commanding an army more occasion for skill than Wellington, all through the Peninsular War. I have pointed out some of the immense difficulties with which he had to contend as well at home as abroad; but I must again refer the reader to the voluminous dispatches for a full or competent idea of what those difficulties really were. Thwarted as he was, he, with a small British army (without which there never would have been a Portuguese army), kept the field against immense forces, and triumphed, after a protracted struggle. At the end of the year 1813, it being necessary to the character of his army that he should remind ministers of what it had done, and of what weight it was to the grand Allied Army in other parts of the continent, he wrote to Earl Bathurst, — "By having kept in the field, in the Peninsula, about 30,000 men, the British Government have now for five years given employment to at least 200,000 French troops of the best Napoleon had, as it is *ridiculous* to suppose that either the Spaniards or Portu-

guese could have resisted for a moment, if the British force had been withdrawn. The armies now employed against us in France cannot be less than 100,000 men, indeed, more, including garrisons; and I see in the French newspapers, that orders have been given for the formation, at Bordeaux, of an army of reserve of 100,000 men. Is there any man weak enough to suppose that one-third of the number first mentioned would be employed against the Spaniards and Portuguese if we were withdrawn? They would, if it was still an object to Buonaparte to conquer the Peninsula; and he would succeed in his object. But it is much more likely that he would make peace with the powers of the Peninsula, and then have it in his power to turn against the grand Allied Armies the 200,000 men, *of which* 100,000 *men are such troops as those Allied Armies have not yet had to deal with.*"*

The duke not only fought the battle of Waterloo in the manner we have seen, but by his influence in the Congress of Vienna he had materially contributed to set in motion those immense European armies which, in the course of a very few weeks would have destroyed Buonaparte, even if Waterloo had been a defeat instead of a victory. He told the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia, that the general strength of the allied nations must be put forth for the common cause; and he assisted in drawing up at Vienna, that wide, grand plan of military operations which was adopted. He told his own government that nothing could be done with a small force; that with a small force the war would linger on at an enormous expense, and end to the disadvantage of the Allies; that motives of economy should induce the British Government to take ample measures to enable Austria, Prussia, Russia, and other states, to move their immense armies against France; and it was upon this wise calculation that Lord Liverpool's government made its prodigious effort, and that the budget of the year 1815 was raised to very nearly 90,000,000*l.*, and that all the continental powers who needed money obtained it. Scarcely an operation or a movement of those grand Allied Armies was undertaken without some previous consultation with the Duke of Wellington, whose military genius was acknowledged by all the foreign generals, and whose amiable, conciliating manners had endeared him to them *all*, whether emperors, kings, royal princes, high-born men, or soldiers who had risen from obscurity by their skill and valour.

The motto given to the heroic Nelson was not more

* 'Dispatches,' vol. xi.

appropriate than is the motto on the duke's escutcheon,—"VIRTUTIS FORTUNA COMES." — Fortune is the companion of valour.—In all the heady fights and terrible mêlées in which the duke was engaged, he was never seriously wounded, and only once hit by an enemy's ball. This was at the battle of Orthes, where he was struck by a spent musket-bullet in the thigh. He did not mention the hurt until the business of the day was over; but then it was found necessary to assist him from his horse. It proved, however, to be but a contusion, and the pain and stiffness were over in a few days. Buonaparte was never hit but once, and that was by a spent musket-ball at Ratisbon. If none but wounds in front are to be esteemed honourable, neither Wellington nor Buonaparte could claim that honour, for they were both struck behind, Buonaparte having been hit on the heel. But, though pretty in a motto, the notion of wounds in front is ridiculous in fact, as, even in a victorious battle, both men and officers may have frequently to turn their backs to the enemy. Except in his early campaigns in Italy, and in the desperate campaign of 1814 in France, Buonaparte was very chary of his person; but Wellington frankly exposed his wherever occasion required it. Writing in 1815, just after the battle of Waterloo, the lamented Southey said,—"This may not be an improper occasion to observe, that the *personal* behaviour of this great Captain has been, on all occasions, as perfect as his conduct as a general: to say that he is brave, is to give him a praise which he shares with all his army; but that for which, above all other officers, he is distinguished, is that wonderful union of the coolest patience with the hottest courage; that sense of duty which restrains him from an ostentatious exposure of a life, of the value of which he could not affect to be ignorant, and that brilliant gallantry which, on the proper occasions, flashes terror into the eyes of the enemy, and kindles in his own army an enthusiasm which nothing can withstand."*

At one moment during the battle of Waterloo, when the duke was very much in advance, observing the enemy's movements, one of his aides-de-camp ventured to hint that he was exposing himself too much. The duke answered with his noble simplicity, "I know I am, but I must die or see what they are doing."†

The Duke of Marlborough was never known to be in a bustle,—a vulgar word, but very expressive of the condition of inferior minds when placed in situations wherein

* 'Quarterly Review,' vol. xiii. p. 470. † Id. p. 522.

there is much to do. The Duke of Wellington, in the busiest periods of his life, was never seen to be in a hurry, and always appeared to have time to spare. By his thorough business-like and systematic arrangements, he had a time for everything, and everything found its proper time. Whether commander-in-chief of the army in the field, or premier in the cabinet, he never left a letter unanswered. Even while campaigning, the number of letters he wrote, on nearly all possible varieties of subjects, was astounding. Often, in one single day, when in presence of the enemy, and in expectation of an immediate battle, he wrote a dozen long letters, which would have been considered as hard work by a functionary at home in the War or Foreign office, who had nothing else to attend to.

A perfect economist in time, the space allotted for indulgence or repose was very limited; he slept little, his meals were simple and short, and hence, the greater portion of the four-and-twenty hours were passed at the writing desk or in the saddle. No hospital, no cantonment, however small, escaped his visits. He listened as attentively to the complaint of a common soldier, as to the remonstrance of a general officer. If a favour were required, it was promptly granted or decisively refused; with grace in the one case, and without harshness in the other. For a long time he was much more thoroughly beloved by the rank and file, than by the officers; and the reason of this will be easily understood by an attentive perusal of his despatches, memoranda, and private letters.

Marlborough, simple and unpretending in his own person, took pride in the good equipment and neatness of his men, and in hearing the princes of Germany declare that his army looked like an army of gentlemen. The Duke of Wellington had the same taste and pleasure; in personal simplicity his costume was in keeping with his character; he despised everything like parade; and, unless when their services were needed, he dispensed with the attendance of his staff. Nothing could be more striking than the plainness of his appearance in public, when contrasted with the general frippery, parade, and display of most of his French adversaries. His plain blue frock-coat, unadorned hat, and clean white cravat, were well known to every man in his army; but strangers had often a difficulty in recognising in this quiet garb, and under his habitually cheerful countenance, the great statesman and soldier—the hero of so many brilliant victories. He was never elated by success, and still less was he ever depressed by failure. Under all circumstances, he

was calm and self-possessed,—his voice, his look, and manner, the same. I can almost forgive the eloquent historian of the Peninsular war his national derelictions, and his prostration before the image of Buonaparte, on account of the justice he occasionally deals out to our glorious British infantry, and which he *always* renders to the Duke. "I saw him late in the evening of that great day (of Salamanca), when the advancing flashes of cannon and musketry, stretching as far as the eye could command, showed, in the darkness, how well the field was won. He was alone, the flush of victory was on his brow, and his eyes were eager and watchful; but his voice was calm and even gentle."*

The same calm voice was heard all through the terrible day of Waterloo; and it was not until he had retired from the field that he gave way, for a moment, to the feelings which filled his heart.

I cannot better conclude the last book of this brief memoir—brief and imperfect, but written with a heart-warm admiration for the subject of it—than by giving an eloquent passage by the true English, noble prose writer, from whom I have often quoted.

"In Gascony, as well as in Portugal and Spain, the Duke of Wellington's name was blessed by the people. Seldom, indeed, has it fallen to any conqueror to look back upon his career with such feelings! the marshal's staff, the dukedom, the half million, the honours and rewards which his prince and his country have so munificently and properly bestowed, are neither the only nor the most valuable recompense of his labours. There is something more precious than this, more to be desired than the high and enduring fame which he has secured by his military achievements: it is the satisfaction of thinking to what end those achievements have been directed; that they were for the deliverance of two most injured and grievously oppressed nations; for the safety, honour, and welfare of his own country, and for the general interests of Europe, and of the civilized world. His campaigns have been sanctified by the cause; they have been sullied by no cruelties, no crimes; the chariot-wheels of his triumphs have been followed by no curses; his laurels are entwined with the amaranths of righteousness, and upon his deathbed he may remember his victories among his good works."†

* W. Napier. † Southey in 'Quarterly Review,' vol. xiii. p. 274.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

In order to prevent the recurrence of the desolating wars which had just been ended, it was determined to place France, the originator of the evil, under military jurisdiction. The command of the force charged with this critical duty was intrusted by common consent to the Duke of Wellington, but for whose mediation France would have fared far more hardly at the hands of the allies. The exasperated Prussians, as we have seen, were bent upon demolishing the monuments of Paris, and even less revengeful spirits inclined to think that a great deal was to be got out of a nation which had inflicted such troubles and miseries on Europe at large, and was now so humiliated. It will hardly surprise the reader to learn that, during his residence in Paris, Wellington's life was twice attempted by assassins—once when a quantity of gunpowder was placed in his cellars for explosion on the occasion of a fête, and, again, when a pistol was fired at his carriage on a drive. The author of this latter attempt was Cantillon, the miscreant to whom, out of respect for this very transaction, Napoleon left a legacy.

In the year 1818, the King of Prussia and the Emperors of Austria and Russia met at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the month of September, and this conference was attended on the part of the English crown by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh. The principal, if not the only, public business transacted here was the agreement for the evacuation of France by the allied army, and the restoration of that State to its independent dignity among European nations. The proposal was in anticipation of the provisions of the treaty which had fixed five years as the possible term of occupation. The private interests of the Duke were largely concerned in the maintenance of this arrangement to its full extent. His emoluments as Commander-in-Chief of the occupying force were very large, and the inclination of most of his political colleagues tended, as he well knew, to the strict enforcement of the compact. Such considerations, however, had no weight against his impartial conclusions, and he so successfully exerted his influence in favour of France that the evacuation was decided upon without difficulty or delay. Indeed, so rapid and decided were his movements that, even before the time for the evacuation of the country was settled, orders were transmitted to

the different armies to march, and, by the end of the year, France was again defended by Frenchmen, and Louis le Desiré an independent sovereign.

But England was not unmindful of her hero. Honours, offices, and rewards were showered on him from every quarter. As the Crown had exhausted its store of titles, and Parliament its forms of thanksgiving, the recognitions of his crowning victory took a more substantial shape. In addition to former grants, the sum of 200,000*l.* was voted, in 1815, for the purchase of a mansion and estate to be settled on the dukedom. With these funds, a commission appointed for the purpose concluded a bargain with Lord Rivers for the domain of Strathfieldsaye, Hants, to be held in perpetuity by the Dukes of Wellington, on condition of presenting a tricolour flag to the British Sovereign on every 18th of June. This symbol, corresponding to a similar token presented by the Dukes of Marlborough, is always suspended in the Armoury at Windsor Castle, where the little silken trophies may be seen hanging together in perpetual memory of Blenheim and Waterloo.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the trophy in the Park (not the monster) was for twenty years the only statue of the Duke which the metropolis possessed. It was subscribed for by the ladies of England between 1819 and 1821, and was erected on the 18th of June, 1822, in which year also the citizens of London presented their splendid shield. The Duke in 1818 was appointed Master-General of the Ordnance, in 1819 Governor of Plymouth, and in 1820 Colonel-in-Chief of the Rifle Brigade. As to foreign courts, they had already said and done their utmost; but in 1818, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Sovereigns of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, simultaneously promoted the Duke to that rank in their respective forces which he had already reached in his own; thus, though he gained every honour by service and none by birth, he died a Field-Marshal of near forty years' standing in four of the greatest armies in the world.

It was now, however, that the great Duke was to take a more direct and visible part in the administration of his country. The old Tory Cabinet had subsisted for ten years under the presidency of Lord Liverpool, without material modification in its constitution or policy. Mr. Canning had certainly been for some time at the head of the Board of Control, but it was not until his accession to the Foreign-Office, in 1822, that his influence was substantially felt in the measures

of the Government. But now the elements of a mighty change began perceptibly to work. The days of unqualified Toryism were almost at an end, and the precursors of reform appeared upon the scene. The principles of general liberalism in the person of Canning, and of free trade in that of Huskisson, were to be gradually introduced into the stubborn cabinet of the Regency, and old men were at length to give place to new. Of the four ancient notabilities, Lord Londonderry was already gone, Lord Sidmouth had just retired, Lord Eldon was declining, and the end of Lord Liverpool was at hand.

Beside the innumerable points of general policy to be thus reconsidered, there were two great questions awaiting a decision—those of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. The former of these, though originally entertained by a Tory minister, had become politically identified with the pledges of the Whigs, and was adopted rather than promoted by the Radicals of the time as the chief object of their agitation. The latter was less essentially a party question, for it concerned the practical government of Ireland rather than the recognition of a theoretical principle; and statesmen and cabinets had been divided on its merits ever since the opening of the war. The measure, however, had been seized by the Whigs as their own; it had been exploded by the Tories, and its destinies were generally connected with the prospects of Whig ascendancy. This party had now, for a very long interval, been excluded from power. Their adversaries had usurped the credit of the war and the support of the electoral constituencies, and it appeared as if they were now irremovably established in their seats of office. Although the state of the country imperatively needed reforms, the great policy of the ministry was, nevertheless, that of repression alone. While new ideas were fermenting among the people with the diffusion of political knowledge and the rapidly growing conviction of misgovernment, the cabinet policy was that of twenty years before, with its rigorous maxims of resistance and severity. The consequences were nothing but natural. The people were seduced by demagogues into wicked excesses and extravagant demands. They held nightly gatherings in the manufacturing counties, hatched chimerical plots of marching on the metropolis, shouted treason at their meetings, and proposed the forcible overthrow of the Government. A conspiracy—known as the Cato-Street conspiracy—for the assassination of the ministry was actually formed,

and was not defeated by any want of resolution or earnestness on the part of the conspirators. However, as an able writer observes, "the scheme was too horrible and too foolish. In the end it appeared that the number involved was very small; so small, that the affair would scarcely deserve a place in history, but for the atrocity of the plan, and the illustration the event affords of the working of the spy system adopted by the Government of the day."*

Of this unpopularity of the administration the Duke had his share. His military eminence was no recommendation in the eyes of those who denounced soldiers as the instruments of tyranny, and who had scarcely been brought, even by a continued series of victories, to approve of an anti-democratic war. And his known sentiments were not of a tendency to conciliate a suspicious public. As Master-General of the Ordnance he had taken a seat in the cabinet, had concurred in the prosecution of the Queen, and had spoken in terms of soldierlike bluntness about certain proceedings of the Opposition. For two or three years affairs proceeded without the occurrence of any remarkable conjuncture. Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson were looked upon with askant eyes. Lord Eldon croaked, Lord Liverpool looked doubtingly ahead, and the Duke, perhaps, saw further than others; yet the old administration remained in outward form substantially the same, and the catastrophe was yet to come. At length, in February, 1827, Lord Liverpool's faculties suddenly failed him, and his fall left the government not only without a head, but without that influence which had hitherto kept it together. Its constituents were divided among themselves on all the great questions coming on. The Duke had not yet discerned the necessity of the doctrines of emancipation and progress, but he was too wise to consort with dotards or bigots, and allied himself rather with Mr. Peel, who had succeeded to Lord Sidmouth's office of Home Secretary in 1822.

In a few weeks, when it became evident that Lord Liverpool's recovery was hopeless, the formation of a new ministry became indispensable, and on the 10th of April the King sent for Mr. Canning. The claims of this statesman to the premiership, both from official services and popular favour, were incontestible; but his opinions represented those of the minority of the cabinet, and it had now to be seen whether those who could co-operate with Mr. Canning under the conciliatory presidency of Lord Liverpool would

* Martineau—History of England during the Peace, vol. i. p. 241.

be content to acknowledge his leadership of the administration. As far as Catholic Emancipation went, no great difficulties need have intervened, for, though the new Premier's favourable disposition towards Ireland was well known, the question was an open one. But Mr. Canning, though not a Whig by profession, was a liberal by principle, and his ministry could not but be a liberal ministry. For this the Duke was unprepared, and when the new appointment was communicated to the members of the late Government, he, like most of his colleagues, sent in his resignation. Nor did he stop here, for he also laid down the Master-Generalship of the Ordnance and the Commandership-in-Chief, to which, at the Duke of York's death, he had succeeded. Moreover, when the Corn Bill of Canning and Huskisson came before the House of Lords, he moved and carried an amendment destructive of the measure.

It was alleged that he desired the premiership for himself, and had adopted these measures to disconcert and embarrass the Government. On these points he delivered himself of an elaborate exculpation from his place in the House of Lords, averring, among other declarations, that, so far from seeking to conduct a Government, he was "sensible of being unqualified for such a situation," and that he "should have been mad to think of it"—words which were not forgotten at a later time. No reader will now suppose that the Duke of Wellington ever thought of dictating to his sovereign, or of combining with others in the spirit imputed to him. What the Duke felt at the new appointment all felt, and all were ready to mark their disapprobation. They did not desire a Liberal Government; they did not admire "political adventurers," and they were unprepared for a cabinet in which the premier stood committed to the emancipation policy, however open the question might be considered. Moreover, there is no doubt that the Duke was personally adverse to an intimate connection with Canning.

The whole episode, however, was of brief duration. Worn out by mental fatigue and harassment, deserted by those who should have been his best adherents, and persecuted on all sides by those who distrusted his politics or envied his elevation, George Canning expired in the fourth month of his office, and left the King and the Government in worse perplexities than before. George Canning died in August; and, before the end of the year, Lord Goderich had resigned his office in despair. Thus there appeared to be no chance of a good working ministry under the Canning

policy, while the true days of the old Tories were already past, and those of the Whigs not quite come. In his embarrassments the King did what kings and queens have so often been compelled to do since—he sent for the Duke of Wellington. The Duke repaired to the royal closet, and, to the surprise of some, the amusement of many, and the satisfaction of more, was gazetted as Prime Minister of England within eight months after his own declaration that the office was wholly beside his powers.

Since Canning's death he had so far qualified his recent secession from affairs as to return to the command of the army, and he had just gratified his countrymen by a series of visits to the aristocracy, in a progress which fell little short of the splendours of royalty. A more serious task was now his lot. He was to charge himself with the formation of a cabinet and the responsible direction of public business, under circumstances which had rendered the attempts of his predecessors impracticable. Perhaps both the King and the Duke would have preferred an administration constructed wholly on the principles entertained by the premier, but of this there appeared no probability. So the Duke took Mr. Huskisson, whom he disliked, and four more "Canningites" besides, but he still retained Peel at his side, and it was evident that the soul of the administration resided here. The chancellorship of the exchequer was filled by Mr. Goulburn, whose name was long afterwards respectably connected with the rising party; but, though the Canningites formed the weaker element of the cabinet, they were thought to contribute much towards shaping its policy; and so, in fact, they did, for, though the men were soon changed, their spirit survived in the measures brought forward.

Before the eyes of the great Duke and his colleagues there still loomed the three great questions of the time. Religious disabilities, Free Trade, and, last but not least, under motions for disfranchising one constituency and enfranchising another, Parliamentary Reform,—these were the perplexing and troublesome matters which were presented for decision. On all these the Duke held opinions which were probably averse to material change. That he was opposed to the views of the Liberal party was not wholly the case, for the Liberal party were not unanimous in their desire for the modification of the Corn Laws; nor was he opposed to the wishes of the country; for the country, on the whole, did not desire Catholic Emancipation. But it is

probable that, on his own judgment, he would have maintained the existing institutions in substantial integrity. What he then thought respecting the Corn Laws he had recently shown; what he thought, after much longer consideration, of Parliamentary Reform is not yet forgotten; and what he thought of religious disabilities we shall presently see.

The very first business of the session brought these questions forward. Lord John Russell moved for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts—the first step towards that religious freedom which Catholic Emancipation would manifestly consummate. Government opposed the measure, but the Reformers were much too strong for them, and the motion was carried in a full house by a majority of forty-four. The Duke, however, yielded, took up the bill with a good grace, and, against the desperate resistance of his old friend Lord Eldon, and of all who thought the church and the constitution veritably at stake, carried it, under his own auspices, through the House of Lords.

A month afterwards came a corn bill of Mr. Huskisson's again, and again did the Duke compromise his private resolutions by accepting it as a Government measure. Later still, as if the session was to test the new ministry on every vital point, the question of Parliamentary Reform was brought under discussion upon a motion to disfranchise the two boroughs of Penryn and East Retford, and invest Manchester and Birmingham with the electoral privileges thus vacated. In the course of the contest, a division was taken on the particular substitution of Birmingham for East Retford. The ministry negatived the proposal, but Mr. Huskisson, then Colonial Secretary, had committed himself to the opposite view. Confused at his position, he sent the Duke what was either a resignation, or an offer of resignation, and what the Duke chose to think was the former. There was, in plain truth, but little cordiality between them. Though the Duke's personal feelings had vanished with Canning's death, he had still no affection towards his party, and certainly no preference for Mr. Huskisson above others. Unpleasant jars had already occurred. Mr. Huskisson had publicly assured his Liverpool constituents that he had not entered the new administration without a guarantee for the general adjustment of its policy by that of Canning. This sounded as if a pledge had been exacted and given—an idea which the Duke indignantly repudiated, and parliamentary explanations had to be offered before the matter could be set at rest. This time the difference was

made final. In vain did the common friends and colleagues of the two statesmen endeavour to explain the unlucky communication. The Duke, in terms which passed into proverbial use, replied, that there "was no mistake, could be no mistake, and should be no mistake." He was not sorry, in fact, that so convenient an opportunity had been created to his hand. Mr. Huskisson therefore retired, and with him retired not only Lord Dudley, Mr. Lamb, and Mr. Grant, but even Lord Palmerston.

The Roman Catholic question was formerly regarded in a light of such abstract policy that, as the Duke remarked, a bill concerning Roman Catholicism in England had been introduced into Parliament towards the close of the last century without even the cognisance of the authorities of Ireland. For a long time it was debated as involving points of principle alone, but of latter years an agitation had been matured which changed the whole features of the subject. Instead of being a question of toleration, it was a question of government. To such a state had Ireland been reduced by O'Connell and the priests, that Catholic Emancipation was now demanded, not on the intrinsic merits of its claims, but as the sole means of satisfying a people who could be governed on no other terms, and bringing one-third of the empire into harmony and unity with the rest. It was under this aspect that it exacted the attention of the Duke. Confident in their strength, and exasperated by the substitution of what they deemed an oppressive ministry for the liberal and promising cabinets of Canning and Goderich, the Irish confederates had isolated themselves, as it were, from all the relations of political and social life for the one sole object of enforcing this demand upon the government by a national movement. There was no law but that of the priests — no rule but that of O'Connell. At length he was even returned to Parliament for Clare, and it was proclaimed by an association, whose menaces seemed warranted by its power, that every county in Ireland should record a like defiance of law and order.

The Duke at last resolved on conceding to the Roman Catholics the emancipation they desired; nor can we now err in ascribing a material share in his decision to the co-operation of Robert Peel. There was no very cheering prospect before the two colleagues. That the influence of the ministry and the example of the Duke would carry the measure through the legislature as a Government question, could hardly be doubted, but other and more serious

considerations were in the way. The Wellington cabinet had been brought into power on the presumption, whether sound or otherwise, that they would maintain the Protestant ascendancy; this opinion was strongly felt by the electoral constituencies of the kingdom, and the conviction was generally understood to be shared in its fullest extent by the most exalted personage in the realm.

Measures of pure political reform, however offensive to particular classes, are rarely unacceptable to the body of the nation; but when religious, instead of civil freedom, is at stake, the proposal seldom escapes some violent antagonism. Whether the majority of the people were ever really favourable to Catholic Emancipation, may be a subject of some doubt, and ministers, with all the pledges of their previous life against them, amid the reproaches of their former friends and the sarcasms of their new allies, seemed to be proposing to carry an almost unpopular measure under what appeared the intimidation of Irish terrorism. This will hereafter claim our notice; but it is enough to observe, that what the Duke, however, had once determined to do, he did in a manner most like himself. In the first place, he resolved that there should be no compromise, insufficiency, or hesitation about the act itself. If concession was to be made, it should be made fully and freely, so as to satisfy all, and leave no rankling vestiges behind. Secondly, like a wise general, he left his adversaries no opportunity of profiting by the disclosure of his plans, but kept his counsels to himself till the time came for action.

However, on the 5th of February, 1829, the policy of the Government was plainly announced in the speech from the throne; and when the field had been once taken, the Duke made short work and sure. The Duke in the Upper House, and Mr. Peel in the Lower, met the exigencies of their respective positions by manful acknowledgments and unanswerable reasoning. It was on this occasion that the Duke, having shown the positive necessity of either advancing or receding, dismissed the latter alternative with his celebrated declaration:—"My lords, I am one of those who have probably passed more of my life in war than most men, and principally I may say in civil war too, and I must say this, that if I could avoid by any sacrifice whatever even one month of civil war in the country to which I am attached, I would sacrifice my life in order to do it." There was no rebutting such arguments, although the opposition was most determined; but the Duke carried his point, and in

little more than a month the Relief Bill passed both Houses by large majorities, received the royal assent, and became the law of the land.

The Whigs now perceived that their time was come, nor did the Duke refuse the battle. He knew that the fight was for Parliamentary Reform, and he brought the point to issue without the delay of an hour. It may surprise observers of our own generation to conceive how such a man, at so great a crisis, could ever have fallen into so serious a mistake. To all appearances the conjuncture of affairs fell peculiarly within the range of his statesmanship. It was a question of yielding, or resistance, of assigning a due and proper value to the reality of the grievance, the demands of the times, and the force of opinion. The Duke had understood such questions in the cases of Free Trade and Catholic Emancipation, and it seems astonishing that he should have stumbled at a case which was clearer than either. To us it would appear that the justice of the popular demand, the urgency of the crisis, and the probable safety of the experiment, ought to have been as clear to the Duke's eyes at that time as they are to our own at present. None could read signs around him better than he, and yet on this occasion he utterly failed. The new Parliament met in November, and at the very opening of the session the Duke delivered his memorable declaration, "that the country already possessed a Legislature which answered all the good purposes of legislation, that the system of representation possessed the full and entire confidence of the country, and that he was not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of reform, but would resist such as long as he held any station in the Government of the country." These few words decided the destinies of the Government and the country too. Radical reform became an immediate certainty, and away went the Tories for ever, and the Wellington party for ten long years.

From this period the Duke's time went on pleasantly enough. His transient unpopularity speedily vanished with the decline of agitation. The people soon forgot that he had been an obstructive, and the Tories that he had been a repealer. He was soon cheered in the streets again as "the Great Duke;" and when the University of Oxford, in 1834, elected him its Chancellor, we may have reason to believe that his compulsory liberalism had been excused. In the same year, it for a moment appeared as if his minis-

terial life were to recommence, and under singular conditions too. The Whigs had been dismissed, and the King, as usual, "sent for the Duke." The Duke recommended that Sir Robert Peel should be charged with the formation of a ministry; and here nothing so clearly manifests the powers of the Duke's mind as his almost superhuman exertions subsequent to the time of the passing of the Reform Bill, at a crisis of peculiar peril. It was at the time when, after the amalgamation of all parties, they came out afresh—"with new members, a new language, a new task, and a whole set of new aims." But nothing can be more apt than the account given us by a distinguished authoress of the present day, which renders our own attempts wholly "works of supererogation."

"The new Conservative rule," says Miss Martineau,* "began with a joke. Some, who could not take the joke easily, were very angry; but most people laughed: and, among them, the person most nearly concerned — the Duke of Wellington—laughed as cheerfully as anybody. Sir Robert Peel was at Rome: it must be a fortnight before he could arrive, so that the Duke took the business of the empire upon himself during the interval. This he called not deserting his sovereign; and he was as well satisfied with himself in this singular way of getting over the crisis, as on all the other occasions when he refused to desert his sovereign. His devotion was such, that for the interval he undertook eight offices—five principal and three subordinate. 'The Irish hold it impossible,' wrote a contemporary, 'for a man to be in two places at once, "like a bird." The Duke has proved this no joke—he is in five places at once. At last, then, we have an united government. The Cabinet Council sits in the Duke's head, and the ministers are all of one mind.'† . . . Condemnations passed at public meetings were forwarded to him, with emphatic assurances that the condemnation was unanimous. An orator here and there drew out in array all the consequences that could ever arise from the temporary shift being made a precedent; and Lord Campbell condescended to talk, at a public meeting at Edinburgh, of impeaching the multifarious minister. At all that, and at a myriad of jokes, the Duke laughed, while he worked like a clerk from day to day, till the welcome sound of Sir Robert Peel's carriage-wheels was heard."

In one of the offices—that of Foreign Affairs—he was

* History of England during the Peace, vol. ii. p. 205.

† England's Seven Administrations, vol. iii. p. 141.

induced to remain; but in a few weeks the whole fabric vanished, and there was an end of the hazard till 1841. True to his own creed, he then accepted the definite repeal of the Corn Laws; and under the same conditions, indeed, would probably have proposed it. He had no longer much difficulty in adjusting himself to Conservative Whigs or liberalized Tories. His rule was necessity—and most Governments of late years have been guided by the same standard.

Now let us turn to the last scene of his "strange, eventful history."

Preserving to the last those temperate habits and that bodily activity for which he was so remarkably distinguished, on Monday, the 13th of September, 1852, he took his customary walk in the grounds attached to the castle, inspected the stables, made many minute inquiries there, and gave directions with reference to a journey to Dover on the following day, where Lady Westmoreland was expected to arrive on a visit to Walmer. His appetite had been observed to be keener than usual, and some remarked that he looked pale while attending Divine service on Sunday, but otherwise nothing had occurred to attract notice or to excite uneasiness, and after dining heartily on venison he retired to rest on Monday night, apparently quite well. Lord and Lady Charles Wellesley were the only visitors at the castle.

Early on Tuesday morning, when Mr. Kendall, the valet, came to awake him, his Grace refused to get up, and desired that the "apothecary" should be sent for immediately. In obedience to his master's orders, Mr. Kendall despatched a note to Mr. W. Hulke, the eminent surgeon at Deal, who has been attached to the family for many years, and whom he desired to repair at once to the castle, and to make a secret of the summons. So great had for many years past been the public interest in the Duke's health, that rumours and fears magnified his most trifling ailments, and the news of his desire for medical aid was consequently suppressed. Mr. Hulke hastened to the castle, where he arrived at about 9 o'clock. He found the Duke, to all appearance, suffering from indigestion, and complaining of pains in the chest and stomach. He was in the full possession of his faculties, and described his ailment very clearly. This his last conversation on earth related entirely to his state of health; and so slight and seemingly harmless were the symptoms that Mr. Hulke confined himself to prescribing some dry toast and tea. He then left, promising to call at about 11 o'clock, but at Lord Charles Wellesley's request he said he would

come at 10. Mr. Hulke, on leaving, called upon Dr. M'Arthur, and told him what he had done, which the latter approved of. Neither of the medical gentlemen appear to have been present when the fatal attack commenced—an attack to which the Duke's constitution has for years been liable, and which, a year and a half ago, had been conquered by their successful treatment. His Grace, when seized, lost the power of speech and of consciousness. On the arrival of the medical attendants emetics were administered, which, however, produced no effect. Every effort was used to afford relief, but in vain. His Grace was removed from bed into an arm-chair, where it was thought he would be more at ease; and the attendants of his dying moments stood in a group around him, watching the last efforts of expiring nature. On one side were Lord Charles Wellesley and Dr. M'Arthur, on the other, Mr. Hulke and the valet. As the time passed on and no sign of relief was visible, telegraph messages were despatched, first for Dr. Hume and then for Dr. Ferguson, who, however, were unfortunately both out of town. Finally, Dr. Williams was sent for, but he did not arrive at the castle till 11 o'clock at night, when all earthly aid was useless. About noon, a fresh attack, shown in the exhausted state of the patient by shivering only, came on, and from that time hardly any sign of animation could be detected. Mr. Hulke could only ascertain by the continued action of the pulse, the existence of life. He felt it from time to time till about a quarter past three, when he found that it had ceased to beat, and declared that all was over. Dr. M'Arthur tried the other arm, and confirmed the fact; but Lord Charles Wellesley expressed his belief that the Duke still breathed, and a mirror was held to his mouth by the valet. The polished surface, however, remained undimmed, and the great commander departed without a struggle or even a sigh to mark the exact moment when the vital spark was extinguished.

In Deal and Walmer the event produced the impression which was to be expected, and which is felt in every part of the country. All the shops were closed, the streets were deserted, the flag at the fort was hoisted half-mast high, and an air of gloom prevailed, with which the state of the weather was in sorrowful keeping. An occurrence which in the nature of things was to have been looked for, and could not possibly long have been postponed, took every one by surprise at last; and though the Duke of Wellington quitted life full of years and full of honours, the sudden-

ness of his removal fell upon the public mind, from the greatness of the man, with somewhat of the shock of a premature death.

In forming estimates of the characters of great men, it has been fashionable to deal in wholesale comparison, and, by putting together persons who have done something like the same thing, under circumstances and associations entirely different, to do equal injustice to both, and to lower one without elevating the other. The Duke, whose loss we now deplore, has shared the common fate of the heroes of history. "A second Alexander," "another Cæsar," varied by "the Alexander of England," "the Cæsar of his time," are expressions as common in the mouths of people as they are unmeaning.

It is not by comparing Arthur, Duke of Wellington, with some obsolete hero of a time with which we have little sympathy, that we shall either form a fair conception of his greatness, or do honour to his deserts. The lives and exploits of Alexander and Wellington are as different as their deaths. The one fought for the lust of empire, the other for the safety of his country. The one revelled in the excitement and wild enthusiasm of valour, the other regulated his courage by a temperate judgment, which lent effect to every blow. The Macedonian conquered, and made no provision to secure his conquests; the English warrior conquered only in order to save what was already acquired. Foolhardiness and a wild taste for a spurious renown made Alexander reckless of life; Wellington risked his own without hesitation, but without heedlessness. The same cool and temperate courage made him careful of the lives of his men. In wars, he well knew, lives must be lost; but the fewer the better. Of their deaths we shall speak presently. But what shall we say of the attempt to compare Buonaparte and his great rival? What shall we think of the long mass of unsatisfactory and ungenerous scribbling of Frenchmen and Englishmen alike on a point likely for ever to remain at issue? We are too hasty in our judgment; much that has been written on this vexatious question only resembles the attempts to square the circle, or to discover a new authorship for the Homeric poems.

It must be years ere we are enabled to estimate the full effects of the career of these two generals on the respective interests of France and England, and little will be gained in the meanwhile by captious abuse, or the affectation of con-

tempt, on either side. The more you write down an adversary, the greater do you prove his importance to be. Nevertheless, the French, under the bayonet reign of Louis Napoleon the Little, have not much to boast of. The glories of Napoleon's battles have left little behind them but a display of fireworks, as an equivalent for public freedom and individual security. England, on the contrary, enjoys a greater amount of liberty at home, and a more extensive and more willingly-recognized influence elsewhere, than it was ever her lot to possess. So far, the results of the victories of Buonaparte and of Wellington leave the balance, as estimated from their consequences, largely in favour of the latter.

It has been a frequent complaint that the character of Wellington was wholly unsusceptible of kindly emotions, that he was a mere disciplinarian, and that, if not naturally cruel, he was professionally harsh, even where human life was concerned. To this we must reply, that no man's temper was ever tried so much, and with so little proportionate reason for complaint. It is a misfortune with some persons to be severe in their very virtue. A mind of exalted firmness, loving the truth, speaking only the truth, and ready to devote life, health, and personal comfort to the realization of one grand object, can ill sympathise with, or find apology for, the relaxed and qualified obedience which others may pay to its behest. The lives of single men become, by the force of circumstances, of little importance in the eyes of him who knows that a single sentinel falling asleep, or a single recreant successfully deserting, may peril the safety of thousands. His very care for the preservation of the whole army must nerve the arm, and steady the hand, even while writing the death-warrant of the offender. But firmness and severity are qualities which are too apt to outstep their legitimate boundaries. They are often so nearly allied to hardness and cruelty, that it is difficult to know by which term we should designate their acts.

Although the Duke might be ranked among even the severest of disciplinarians, it is an open injustice to deny him the possession of many traits of an inward gentleness, which, without degenerating into softness, formed the mainspring of many an act of simple and unostentatious benevolence, would make him sympathise with the widow of the fallen warrior, or hail some battered old soldier, of whose broken leg he knew the whole history. A hundred anecdotes are current, which show the love in which the

"Iron Duke" was held by his whole army. A hundred tales, which even the vanquished paraded with delight, attest his generosity to the conquered, and his unwillingness to revenge the losses which an armed force and a perverse government had inflicted upon a helpless and unprotected multitude. How often was his very sternness the sole means which could prevent the vanquished falling victims to the savage and wanton excesses of a soldiery who had been exhausted by toil, and were now maddened with success! Could we impartially and coolly read over the whole narrative of the Duke's campaigns, we should find that while the severity he exercised was the sole source of the respectability and efficiency of our troops in the Peninsular war, the trials and privations he underwent were such as, in a less cool and systematic nature, must have developed a habit of arbitrary cruelty, and given loose rein to all the terrific excesses which disgraced the most famous victories of former times. "I must be cruel that I may be kind," is no merely poetical paradox. It is a simple truth that should be engraven in the hearts of those who lay claim to any influence over others. Compare the amount of strictness which a conscientious clergyman must exercise in a parish filled with infidelity and dissoluteness—the severity with which the management even of an ordinary boys'-school must be conducted—and compare the difficulties in which the Duke was placed, and the numbers, and character of the numbers whom he had to govern; and the tear of the Recording Angel will not be found wanting to efface his severities from the page of history.

But there was nothing misanthropical in the Duke's severity. He was as finished a gentleman as soldier. He had an affable word for everyone, but he had no words to waste. He could unbend, and unbend gracefully; but he never forgot business. The intensity of his character was too great to allow of frivolity, but his accurate good sense taught him to consider even the lighter duties of society as worthy of consideration. Beauty, wit, and liveliness were not without their attractions for him, but they never interfered with the demands of duty. His mind was never distracted from the performance even of the most ordinary matters, however great might be the temptation. To the latest moments of his life, he was always to be found when wanting, always willing to forget ease and comfort, and begin work afresh. Whether in the field or the cabinet he was always to be depended upon, and the harder and less

alluring the duty, the more certain was he to undertake its performance. He who could chat good-naturedly with his housekeeper about matters on which editors would have given worlds for his opinion—who, it has been observed, had "a compliment for the prettiest face"—who has gone, alone and in no company save that of a heart satisfied with itself, to put letters into the post-office, enclosing the means of relief, often, it is to be regretted, to the successful impostor—surely his name is not to be chronicled side-by-side with the cold-blooded conquerors who have known society only as a field for the display of *spectacles* in their own honor. Wellington courted no show. Unlike a modern French adventurer, he had claims on public love which a hurricane of fireworks and a cascade of *bon-bons* could never have purchased.

Of the private occupations of the life of the Duke, the little we know is favourable to his memory. His hardy frame was kept in constant exercise by early walks. He retired to rest early, read, wrote, and took his meals with a regularity that well illustrated his previous career. It may be doubted whether his life, long as it was, was not shortened by the severity of his early toils in India; but few men have preserved health of mind or body in a like perfection of efficiency. How great is the contrast between the deaths of the Macedonian and the English warrior! The one died prematurely of a childish debauch, after murdering his dearest friend in a drunken broil; the other sunk under the weight of exhausted nature, after a life in which intemperance had had no share.

The position of Wellington as a statesman has excited no small variation among the opinions of politicians. Panegyrists have sought to elevate his political talents to a level with his military capacity. Admirers have been unwilling to confess the possibility of the Duke ever being mistaken; while another class would make us believe that his politics were scarcely ever successful, and that his whole Parliamentary career displays little else than a succession of failures. Neither extreme is right. The Duke was by no means ignorant of financial matters, and is even said to have expressed his opinion that his true genius was rather for the Exchequer than the War-office. At one of the most critical conjunctures of the Peninsular war he drew up a most able paper on the true principles of Portuguese banking; and at Seringapatam, after very serious evils had been experienced from a long-standing debasement of the coinage,

a memorandum was accidentally discovered in the treasury from the pen of Colonel Wellesley, every prediction and observation of which had been exactly verified by events. Wellington's abilities were tasked in a government where all progress is the result of compromise, where no interest is destroyed without compensation, where the most resolute minister is forced to qualify his own convictions in deference to those of his opponents, and where every act has to sustain the tedious ordeal of Parliamentary discussion. We do not say that Wellington possessed Napoleon's power of administration. We are aware that no such pretensions could be advanced on his behalf. But it should be also added that their respective spheres of action admit of no comparison, and that the Duke's conclusions, if less brilliant than the conceptions of his antagonist, have proved better calculated for the test of experience.

The chief characteristic of Wellington's mind was a steady good sense, which invariably led him to investigate every bearing of a subject. He was not easily surprised; indeed, the *nil admirari* was developed in his character to an extent which easily accounts for the popular opinion as to his insensibility to the ordinary attractions of life. He was no romancer. He never made eloquent speeches, filled with seductive rhetoric and fine-drawn metaphors. He did not seek to colour, where a plain outline would suffice. Words were never wanting to him when really needed, because never wasted uselessly. He did not, like "our honourable friend," devote elegant periods to the praise of his hearers, or the condemnation of an imaginary abuse—a ghost of his own raising. He spoke only of realities; and his language was derived from the real world. He was one of the striking and rare instances in which plain straightforwardness worked its way, and forced the decorative frippery of speech-makers into dumb astonishment. It has been finely and pointedly observed, that "he never set human nature at more or less than it was worth. He made allowance for passions, interests, and contingencies, computed things at their true value, and deduced conclusions which were rarely wrong. His despatches abound with opinions on the governments, politics, and men with whom he was brought into contact, and it would be difficult to point out one among them all which facts have not more or less confirmed."

It cannot, however, be denied that the "old school" cautiousness had some considerable effect in restraining

the Duke from many measures which tended to the well-being of society. When his military career had ceased, old remembrances prevented his appreciating the mild and moralizing alterations which have conduced to the improvement and comfort of our standing army. As respected the organization and equipment of the army, no opinions could be more liberal than his own; but it cannot be said that he was equally enlightened in his views of the service in general. In fact, he looked upon military reforms as he looked upon civil reforms—without absolute bigotry, but with no willing mind, and perhaps even in the light of unconservative intrusions. The successive improvements in the condition of the British soldier originated with others than the Commander-in-Chief, and were not unusually carried out in despite of his opposition. For all that could make the soldier "efficient," according to the old practical ideas of efficiency, a ready advocate was always to be found in the Duke; but the reforms of the recruiting and the relief systems, the amelioration of barrack life, and, above all, the abolition of military flogging—a measure which ought to have been carried much earlier—were not due to the Commander-in-Chief, though experience has now shown the perfect propriety of their introduction. His professional faculties never failed him to the last. His views respecting the exposure of our coasts to invasion, however their soundness might have been contested at the time, were indisputably correct according to the maxims of his own experience. If there were error, it was not in judgment, but in understanding. If Frenchmen and Englishmen were indeed such as the Duke had known them—if war were to be, as heretofore, the appeal of kings and cabinets at the first international disagreement—then there could be no doubt that our defences were inadequate for public security. These conditions we may hope have somewhat changed, but it can be as little reproach to the old Duke that he had not yet arrived at such conviction, as it is disgraceful to ourselves that our defences are in their present inadequate condition. On our famous 10th of April, his peculiar genius was exerted to the unspeakable advantage of peace and order. So effective were his preparations, that the most serious insurrection could have been successfully encountered, and yet every source of provocation and alarm was removed by the dispositions adopted. No military display was anywhere to be seen. The troops and the cannon were all at their posts, but neither shako nor bayonet was visible; and, for all that

met the eye, one might have concluded that the peace of the metropolis was still intrusted to the keeping of its own citizens. As an instance, however, of his forecast against the worst on this memorable occasion, it may be observed that orders were given to the commissioned officers of artillery to take the discharge of their pieces on themselves. The Duke knew that a cannon shot too much or too little might change the aspect of the day, and he provided by these remarkable instructions both for imperturbable forbearance as long as forbearance was best, and for unshrinking action when the moment for action came.

In the House of Lords the Duke was a regular attendant, and not unfrequently a speaker, but the journals of that body supply few testimonies of our hero's excellence. His opinions and votes, excepting when his natural Conservatism had not yet been sufficiently influenced by pressure from without, were rarely otherwise than soundly given, but his motives were often imperfectly expressed. In addressing the House, the Duke allowed himself to be carried away, not by the excitement of feeling, but by the impetus of a delivery which, without being either fluent or rapid, was singularly emphatic and vehement. Although exaggeration was no part of the Duke's character, he warmed with his subject, especially if it was of a military character, and would sometimes, either designedly or from warmth of feeling, magnify his own opinions in order to impress them upon his hearers. If he recommended, as he did with great alacrity, a vote of thanks to an Indian general, the campaign was always "the most brilliant he had ever known;" if he wished to stigmatize a disturbance of the peace, it was something transcending "anything he had ever seen in all his experience," though such a quality could hardly be predicated of any disorder under the sun. One of the best chroniclers of his deeds has attributed this precipitate bestowal of praise and censure to a natural failure of character, but we suspect that in many cases the error of the opinion was due to the manner of its delivery alone. "Few men," it has been observed, "have been intrusted with more delicate missions in the distribution of rewards, and none could have discharged such duties with more unimpeachable discrimination. The Duke could appreciate events with unfailing nicety, but he failed in the capacity to describe them, and of late years his speeches, where they were not tautology, were often contradictions. Nor could the failing be traceable to age alone, for it was observed,

though in a less degree, during the earlier stages of his career, and is the more remarkable from the contrast presented by his despatches. No letters could ever be more temperately or perspicuously expressed than these famous documents. Even as specimens of literary composition they are exceedingly good—plain, forcible, fluent, and occasionally, like those of Napoleon, even humorous withal."

There is yet one matter on which we cannot be wholly silent, and that is the Catholic Emancipation Bill. Recent movements in the Church have given an invidious prominency to Catholicism, and more than one jealous eye has directed itself to Apsley House, as though the assent of the Duke to a measure which he had so earnestly repudiated, had endangered the safety of the English Church. It is even to be doubted whether the Duke—an obvious and persevering opponent of what many have regarded only in the light of qualified Popery—Tractarianism—has not himself deeply regretted the part he had taken. He was a steady, practical churchman, and cared as little for a highly-decorated religion as for a luxurious dinner. Plain truths would readily satisfy a man with whom truth was the greatest virtue. His assent was dictated by expediency, and, we may almost say, necessity, not by any sympathy with the principles, or collusion with the insidious advances, of Papal Catholicism.

On the whole, with the most distinct and definite opposition to anything like Papal aggression, we are equally convinced of the impolicy of penal legislation against any religious creed, provided it is deprived of all power of secular interference. Opposition often strengthens opposition, and it has ever been the policy of Roman Catholics to put themselves in the light of the oppressed party. Sufferance often lets a thing die out, to which opposition would only act as sand-paper does to lucifers. Hoping, as we do, that the passing of the "Jew Bill" will soon efface one of the remaining acts of illiberality, which, while they rob us of the services of many efficient citizens, do not, in the least, conduce to the preservation of the religion of the Church, unless, indeed, Church religion and bigotry must be identical. "Soldiers," as Corporal Trim observes, "can say their prayers;" but they are scarcely likely to sympathize with the minute ramifications and delicately-drawn distinctions of a dogmatic system. Without any wish to depreciate the real and proper value of orthodoxy, we can well pardon the Duke having taken a political rather than a clerical view

of the Catholic question. Those who remember the time in which that bill was passed will not be surprised at our want of sympathy with some of the popular indignation on the subject.

It were easy to devote volumes to the praise of one who, like the Duke of Wellington, has earned every honour that humanity can bestow, and of whom, nevertheless, no one has ever spoken, or can ever speak of as "over rewarded." Monuments—not always most creditable to national (or rather Government) taste—will not transmit the name of Wellington to posterity with greater *eclát* than will the pens of ten thousand writers.

The ancient warriors of the north, in their horror of lingering sickness, and with a barbarous preference for a death by arms, would gash themselves with wounds, or hurl themselves from a rock, and so go triumphing to the Hall of Odin. Fancy, even in recent times, has often associated a violent death and a glorious one as identical. As the warrior of the classic era prayed that no lingering sickness, no insidious disease, but the deadly point of the distant-sped arrow, or the deep wound received in front from the sharp sword of a renowned combatant, might be their medium of transit to the sunless shade of the grave—so the soldiers of the Peninsula have shunned a death-bed with horror, and have craved the ghastly plain of the battle-field for their last resting place. A kindlier fate was reserved for the Duke. He had valued life, and esteemed valour, just for what each was worth. A dignified and honoured old age, spent amidst the admiration of a grateful nation and the love of friends, whom a participation in danger and difficulty had endeared—such was the preliminary to a tranquil and silent death. No languishing or painful sickness, no aberration of intellect, prostrated the energies of the noble old warrior. It was a curious accident that he died in his arm-chair. The bed of death was no place for him who was only about to change immortal fame for a still grander immortality yet in store. Death saw him not recumbent: a few spasms agitated the frame that so many battles had left unshaken, and the soul fled from its earthly companion, leaving it seated perhaps in the dignity of the dead Charlemagne, and leaving a name as undying as history, to seek that glory which is treasured up for the good and the great of all time.

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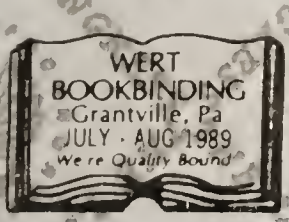

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